ERIC Document Resume	See Instruction Sheet	DATE OF RESUME	DATE RECEIVED

A. PUBLICATION DATA

1. ERIC NUMBER	2. ORIGINATOR CONTROL NO(S).	3. IDENTIFICATION NO.
ED002192	N.A.	N.A.

DO NOT WRITE IN SPACE BELOW

4. AUTHOR(S):
Buckheimer, Naomi and Buckheimer, Arnold

5. TITLE OF DOCUMENT ABSTRACTED:
Equality through Integration

6. PUBLICATION TITLE:
N..A.

7. EDITOR(S):
N.A.

8. PLACE OF ORIGIN
ORG. Greenburgh School District No. 8,
ST. Greenburgh, N. Y.
CITY, STATE
TELE. EXT.
INST/LOC CODE

9. PUBLISHER OR SOURCE
A Report on Greenburgh School District No. 8, Greenburgh, New York

10. VOL.	11. PAGES	12. MO./YR.	13. TOTAL PP.
N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	67

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TYPE OF REPORT
PROPOSAL ☐
IN-PROGRESS ☐
FINAL ☒
FOLLOW-UP ☐

OTHER ERIC REFERENCES:

ERIC SATELLITE CODE

B. INDEXING DATA

14. SUBJECT AREA

15. TYPE OF ENDEAVOR report

16. INDEXING TERMS (6-12)

integration	de-facto segregation	Project Able	
teacher attitudes		educational improvement	
curriculum re-evaluation		cultural lag	
		project able	Greenburgh, N. Y.

17. ABSTRACT (MAX. 250 WORDS)

Greenburgh District 8 is located 25 miles north of New York City in Westchester County, with a population of 12,000; 2,500 are school pupils. Racial population is 35 percent Negro, 65 percent white. A wide range of religions, nationalities, educational levels, and economic levels is evident in the community.

The first Negro member of a school board in New York State was from Greenburgh, and with his encouragement Negroes began to work for improvement in schools. An administrator was chosen who was personally committed to desegregating the schools; community groups assisted in establishing recreation programs which brought together youngsters of both races. With the influx of substantial numbers of white children into the system, efforts to improve the schools gradually began to meet with success. In 1951, ways were sought to end de-facto segregation. The Princeton plan was adopted.

It was found that the greatest single problem involved in integration was to change attitudes and feelings of teachers. Educational consultants were sent in by universities in the metropolitan area, psychologists and guidance experts were hired, and balanced classes were set up. A study team of professors of education from New York University evaluated progress and made recommendations. It was found that Negro children were behind white youngsters in IQ, in achievement, and in relative gain from year to year. To overcome this lag, recommendations were made to enrich learning experiences, to make greater use of physical and human resources in the community, and to secure more and better instructional materials. Monetary support was given under Project ABLE. Specific procedures suggested to achieve true integration are heterogeneous grouping, early remediation to lessen cultural gaps, high school grouping according to potential, and re-evaluation of the curriculum.

ERIC No.

18. SOURCE OF ABSTRACT

C. FUNDING DATA

19. SUPPORTING ORGANIZATION	20. DIVISION OR DEPT.	21. CONTRACT NO. / PROJECT NO.
	22. TOTAL COST OF PROJECT	
	23. DURATION OF PROJECT	U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare Office of Education

ED002192

Equality through Integration

A Report on Greenburgh School District No. 8

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Equality through Integration

A Report on Greenburgh School District No. 8

by Naomi and Arnold Buchheimer

To our children

for whom we would like the kind
of education offered by the
Greenburgh District No. 8 schools.

**The Anti-Defamation League wishes to
thank Dr. George Fitch, Supervising Principal;
members of the Board of Education; and
the administrative and instructional staffs of
Greenburgh School District No. 8 for
their gracious and complete cooperation.**

Foreword As society becomes more complex the need for human engineering becomes proportionately acute. In a world where peoples of different colors and cultures are rising and taking their place in the international councils, it is urgent that our children learn to live with differences in mutual respect and peace. How to lead the youths of this nation to the encounters which develop skills of citizenship commensurate with this need is one of education's most pressing problems. It is compounded by the trend toward segregated living both in the inner cities and the suburbs. Who goes to school with whom is perhaps the most basic curriculum decision a board of education ever makes, for what children live, rather than what they study, teaches them lessons in the ways which count.

Closely related to this need of citizenship skill is the problem of identity with community. In spite of the developments in communication skill within the past two decades, there is a rising sense of alienation which, as one of our poets expressed it, erodes the very vitals of modern man.

"Lonely and afraid / In a world I never made."

It is in the probing of these deeper issues that Greenburgh School District #8 looms in significance. In the beginning, a wise leader had persuasive ability enough to get the citizens to start in the right way. He saw the need to keep the community from becoming fragmented by neighborhood schools. This precious ingredient of "community" was to be retained and children were to learn to live with differences. All the children were to come to a common encounter with each other in the uncommon "common" school.

To be sure there were those who objected to this "mixing." Some would still like to withdraw from the encounter and return to the "tribalism of their *own kind*." Many fear their children will really learn to not hate, not discriminate, not denigrate their fellow citizens. These, however, are a dwindling minority.

As one reads the chronicle of this social experiment he is impressed with the effort which has gone into it. And while mistakes may have been made, the accomplishments are such that other school people are today, with visits and inquiries, beating a path to their door. In fact, one of the great dangers is that America is so hungry today for success stories in the very area in which this school district has excelled, that the integrity of their work is threatened by its very popularity.

Through those first years, the school system never thought of itself as doing anything except meeting the educational needs of their community. There were no magnificent grants in those first years. It was only when the present Supervising Principal and his board became worried about educational quality, and the N.Y.U. team started working with them, that assistance from the state in the form of Project ABLE was envisioned.

It has taken patience and hard work on the part of the staff and the Board of Education to bring the community along in this undertaking. White parents of middle-class backgrounds often found it hard to believe that their children would not be penalized by associating with others in broad-ranged ability groupings. When our N.Y.U. study revealed that there was no cause for concern, many still did not believe it. Racial mixing became the scapegoat for all the frustrations parents felt when their children did not measure up to those impossible expecta-

tions they have demanded of them.

Research, experimentation and increased understanding have made it possible to make significant advances in overcoming the disadvantages with which some Negro children were burdened. What is equally important—they helped some white children also.

What impresses one about Greenburgh School District #8 is that there is no *de facto* segregated school—as well there might have been. No children feel more or less privileged than others—for they all go to school together. No teachers feel they are less fortunate because they teach in a stigmatized neighborhood school—all schools serve all the people of the community. No segment of the community feels it is second class because of school assignment. No segment of the community lives in unshared educational privilege with its attendant alienation and ultimate corruption. Issues are not just Negro or white issues—they are community issues, shared communally.

The greatest discovery our N.Y.U. involvement revealed to Greenburgh was their "educational problems," not their racial problems. Color succeeded only in putting a tracer on some of them to make sure they were not glossed over or hidden.

Supervising Principal George Fitch, his staff, and his wonderfully supportive Board of Education more than deserve the accolades which they have received. Their modesty about their accomplishments is in the best tradition of scholarship and educational inquiry. The Anti-Defamation League is to be congratulated for making their story available to the wider public. It is only hoped that making it available in this form will relieve some of the pressure on staff time required to inform those who wish to know about what they are doing.

The Springfield Plan of two decades ago was killed by receiving so much attention that the school system became distracted from its essential tasks and started playing a national role. A nation hungry for success stories deserves to know about Greenburgh. Greenburgh, in turn, deserves the chance to keep concentrating on its unfulfilled task which it has so ably begun. This volume, so ably written by Naomi and Arnold Buchheimer, should help achieve both purposes.

Dan W. Dodson,
Director, Center for Human Relations and Community Studies, New York University

A Community Chapter I Makes a Commitment

1932
A Cross Burns in Westchester

1947
Interracial School Improvement Committee Begun

THESE two events, one negative, the other positive, were important milestones on the way to transforming a New York school district from one that was segregated and inferior to a model of integrated and quality education. Located about 25 miles north of New York City in prosperous Westchester County, Greenburgh District 8 is tied together only by its educational system; the many separate neighborhoods are not incorporated into a single political unit. There are 12,000 residents including 2,600 pupils in this five-square mile area.

The dates of 1932 and 1947 are both related to the fairly large concentration of Negroes in Greenburgh. The original Negro population was brought in during World War I as laborers. They settled near the center of Greenburgh in a swampy area with poor drainage; an area they still occupy. Some of their grandchildren still have trouble crossing over the mud on their way to school. At present, Greenburgh is approximately 35 per cent Negro. Not all of these are descendants of the first settlers; after World War II a group of middle-class Negroes bought homes in the area. In addition, there is now a low-income housing project where many Negroes live. More than one real estate agent, however, discourages white people from buying homes in District 8 by saying that the schools are 90 per cent Negro.

Today, the population includes a wide range of religions, of nationalities, of races, and of educational and economic levels. Scattered throughout this combined rural and suburban community (though not living next

door to each other) are people with Ph.D's and those who are barely literate; people who have paid $45,000 for their homes and those who live in slums; people who work as executives in large corporations and those who subsist on welfare allowances; and members of most national and ethnic groups. About ⅓ of the population is Protestant, ⅓ Jewish, and ⅓ Catholic. One element lacking in Greenburgh, an element evident in some of the surrounding towns, is a substantial upper class.

As people move in and out of the school district, and as the school population grows (it recently hit the 2500 mark), the racial balance continues to be about 65 per cent white and 35 per cent Negro. During 1963, 80 new elementary school children entered District 8 and 54 children left. Of those who entered, 42 per cent were Negro and 58 per cent were white. Of those who left, 37 per cent were Negro and 63 per cent were white.

The First Milestone—1932

Rev. Louis W. Hughes

In the early '30's, the few wealthy white people in the area sent their children to private schools; as a result, the Negroes occupied at least half the seats in the public schools. In view of this ratio, the Negroes in the community felt that they needed to be represented on the Board of Education.

It was 1931 when an old-time resident, Reverend Louis W. Hughes, minister of the Union Baptist Church, decided to run for the Board. The desperate economic insecurity of the white population helped defeat Rev. Hughes in this depression year. A whispering campaign against him was conducted along racist lines. "It's part of a plot to take over District 8 for the Negroes," said some. "We'll be flooded with every colored family in Harlem," muttered others. Reverend Hughes was not elected.

The following year he ran again—and won: the first Negro member of a School Board in the State of New York. The night before the election, a cross was burned near the minister's home. He refused to be intimidated. The very evening of the election, with the polls still open, some of the white citizens arranged for a false fire alarm, trying to scare the Negroes into leaving the polls by making them believe that their homes were burning. Not one Negro left; they were resolved to stay on at the polls to keep the election from being rigged. They went home only after the votes had been counted and they were sure that their candidate had won.

A true leader, Reverend Hughes used his influence not only to help members of his own race, but to improve the schools for everyone in Greenburgh. Some of the white people supported his moves for hiring more Negroes, first as maintenance men, later in the role of qualified teachers; these same white citizens backed

burgh schools to a standard of excellence. After interviews with twelve promising candidates, Dr. Richard J. Bailey, who held his doctorate from New York University, was chosen.

With the backing of the Board and the community at large, Dr. Bailey immediately set a dynamic program into action. He saw to it that the school buildings were put into better shape; he set up an in-service training program for teachers; he established an adult education program; and he raised teachers' salaries, although he refused an increase for himself.

Personally committed to desegregating the schools, Dr. Bailey received substantial help from several similarly motivated sources. One community group established a recreation program which provided a natural way of bringing together Negro and white youngsters. It also served the additional purpose of providing activities for children whose parents were both working. A Negro member of the community worked with Dr. Bailey and his staff making visits to the homes of problem students.

All of these efforts helped set the stage for the desegregation of the schools which was to follow. Ironically, a common situation in reverse was largely responsible for up-grading the schools—a large influx of educationally ambitious middle-class whites into a school system which was half Negro. *And it was not until there were substantial numbers of white children in the Greenburgh school system that the Negroes' efforts to improve the schools began to meet with success.*

An End to De Facto Segregation—1951

"Integration in Greenburgh was not related to civil rights demands."

Dr. George E. Fitch

Necessity drove the citizens of Greenburgh to search for a solution to a segregation problem; idealism, money, and common sense provided an answer.

Dr. Bailey was the administrator of three schools. The older of the two elementary schools was predominantly white and very over-crowded. The newer elementary school, the one built in the Negro ghetto in 1939, had many empty classrooms. The third school, a junior high, was also under-utilized and heavily Negro. In March 1951, Dr. Bailey presented four plans to the Board of Education, each designed to alleviate the overcrowding and to provide for desegregation.

Plan Number 1 called for building a new school. By carefully choosing an interstitial or fringe location, a new elementary school would draw children from both Negro and white areas. This idea brought strong opposition from those who were not interested in spending money for new buildings when sufficient desk space already existed.

Plan Number 2 called for the transfer of some white pupils to the all-Negro school. "Whose kid will be transferred?" was the question frequently asked, followed

by "How do I know it won't be mine?"

Plan Number 3, essentially, would have eliminated attendance areas and permitted students to go to either school on a first come, first served basis.

It was Plan Number 4, known as the Princeton Plan, that eventually reorganized the entire school system. Under this proposal every child in the district would attend kindergarten, first, second, and third grade in the formerly all-Negro school. Every child would then attend the "white school" from grades four through six. The third school would continue to be a junior high for all of District 8.

Initially, Board of Education members settled on a minimum of reshuffling based on Plan Number 2. All the fifth and sixth graders from the over-crowded white school would be sent to the empty classrooms in the Negro school.

The uproar that greeted their decision was accompanied by protests that invariably began with:

"I'm not prejudiced BUT...."

The end of each comment varied from predictions of violence to the lowering of academic standards to communicable diseases carried by "dirty Negro children." Some of those who objected most vociferously to any form of desegregation circulated a petition demanding that the Board of Education decision be nullified and that the community's neighborhood civic associations vote on the plans. The Board of Education accepted the demand to put all four plans to a vote.

Now was the time for the machinery set in motion

four years earlier to come into play. The Jenkins-Driscoll committee to improve the schools had vocal members in every one of the fourteen local civic organizations. These dedicated people, plus their deputy, Dr. Bailey, talked day after day, night after night, at public meetings sponsored by community associations and in the living rooms of private homes, explaining patiently but firmly why the schools should be desegregated. They pointed out, for example, the irrationality

of accusing all Negro children of carrying unmentionable diseases when the mothers of these very same children worked in white homes.

The pro-integration forces contended that support of the schools was enlightened self-interest. Good schools maintained high property values. Catholic parents were reminded that the schools served their children, at least in public kindergarten, and often long afterwards, if the parochial school was over-crowded.

Toward the end of April, the fourteen civic groups voted. Thirteen of the fourteen voted in favor of integration. And what is more, they voted for Plan Number 4—the bold Princeton Plan for complete and immediate integration. On the last day of April, the Board of Education passed a resolution to end segregation in Greenburgh, beginning the following autumn, for a one-year trial period.

A Trial Period of Desegregation—1951-1952

"At first I didn't see my pupils as a group but as white and Negro. But by Christmas I found that I had changed without really knowing it. They were my students. It was my class."

A white teacher in Greenburgh

By far the greatest single problem involved in integrating the schools was to change the attitudes and feelings of the teachers. How could they possibly teach children likely to vary so much? How would they handle interracial tensions which they were positive would occur? It was a fact that many emotionally-disturbed Negro youngsters had been placed with foster families in Greenburgh by the New York City Welfare Department. Would they present serious discipline problems?

Every conceivable source of aid was brought into play to assist the teachers to overcome their real and imaginary reservations. The New York State Department of Education helped set up elementary school classes that were balanced in terms of race and ability. Universities in the metropolitan area were asked to send in educational consultants to aid teachers in finding techniques to reach every child in their class. A consulting psychologist and a guidance expert were hired to assist teachers in dealing with emotionally-disturbed pupils. The adult education program established earlier by Dr. Bailey had already laid the groundwork for cooperation between many Negro and white parents in the community.

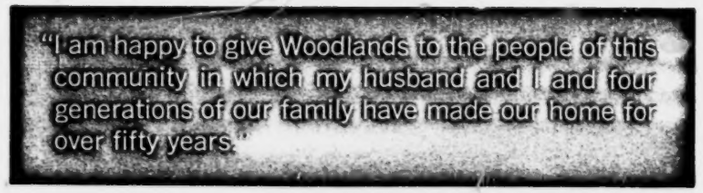
By spring, more Negro parents began to attend the Parent Teachers Association meetings and to offer their opinions on various matters. But also by spring, a hard core of resistance had manifested itself among a section of the white population. This group strongly advocated ability grouping, and they requested that the Board of Education separate all students into three different schools according to performance. Ability grouping is, in itself, a form of segregation. And, be-

cause of the prior deprivation of many of the Negro children, the net result of such grouping would in effect separate Negro and white children. All the gains of the trial period would be swept away if they were unable to attend the same school.

In spite of all his fears to the contrary, Dr. Bailey barely needed to enter the argument at the open meeting which followed. The vast majority of the parents, convinced as they were, answered every objection raised by their segregationist neighbors. The Princeton Plan remained intact.

Three years later, at the age of 49, Dr. Bailey died. At the time of his death, he had been appointed superintendent of a large Westchester district, and Dr. Thomas Russo, a Greenburgh principal, held Dr. Bailey's former position.

A Ready-Made Educational Park



Mrs. Frieda S. Warburg

Matters on the integration front were relatively quiescent. The first battles had been fought and won. By 1956 the Board of Education realized that it was outgrowing its facilities. The members discussed various building sites and settled on a plot of several acres in the southeast corner of the district, which belonged to Mrs. Felix Warburg, widow of the financier. Representatives of the Board approached Mrs. Warburg to ask her to sell this section of her vast estate. She received the men graciously and asked them to give her a few days to think it over.

The following week, Mrs. Warburg put in a call to the Board of Education. "How would you like the whole estate?" she asked.

Knowing that they couldn't possibly afford the 160 acres that Mrs. Warburg offered, the members of the Board had to decline. "We don't have the money for more than a few acres," one of them answered in dismay.

Mrs. Warburg then explained that she was giving her entire acreage to District 8, not selling it. The Board of Education accepted the gift gratefully. They received property worth approximately two million dollars—property that included woods, buildings, hills, ponds, meadows, and orchards.

In the years since Mrs. Warburg gave her living legacy to the community, it has been put to good use for young and old alike. Playing fields for baseball and tennis courts have been developed. One of the buildings on the campus houses a cooperative nursery school. Juniper Hill, a modern, split-level elementary school for first and second graders, was built in 1959 on the Warburg grounds. Woodlands High School, a five-building complex for seventh through twelfth grade opened in 1961.

At present, any child going through school in Green-

burgh District 8 attends five different buildings during the course of his education. In kindergarten, he is housed in one of 6 rooms at the Warburg mansion, a huge building that resembles a Tudor castle. This mansion, set in a wooded area with squirrels and songbirds just outside the windows, doubles as the administration headquarters.

After a year in kindergarten, the pupil goes to Juniper Hill, built for first and second graders.

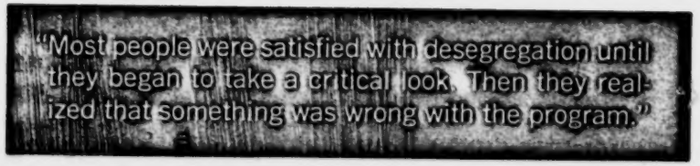
When he is in third grade, he attends Old Tarrytown School, the building that first segregated Greenburgh in 1939.

Some fourth graders stay on at Old Tarrytown, but because of the limited number of classrooms, others are sent to R. J. Bailey School. By fifth grade, all students are at Bailey where they remain until they finish sixth grade. The pupils spend their last six years of school at Woodlands High, on the Warburg campus.

In addition, there is a P.T.A.-sponsored program one afternoon a week for which there is no tuition fee. Regular nursery school personnel supervise this project.

Because of the Princeton Plan, most children live too far to walk all the way to school. The Board of Education provides bus service for any child who lives more than one-half mile from his elementary school or one mile from high school. Actually, the Warburg tract is not at all centrally located, so about 85 per cent of the total student population goes to school by bus. With the exception of only two Board of Education owned buses, the rest are obtained on contract. The cost is not prohibitive—less than $50 a year per child, because the state of New York covers 80 per cent of the total cost. The Princeton Plan is a money saver because no school has to provide equipment like books, tables, and chairs for more than two grades.

Desegregation Is Not Integration—1957 to ?



Dr. George E. Fitch

In the spring of 1957 when Dr. Russo, Dr. Bailey's successor, was selected to fill a more responsible position in the county school system, the Board of Education hired Dr. George Fitch. As Dr. Fitch became acquainted with the community and with his staff, he readily noted how much progress had already been made. But he was also aware of the rumblings of dissatisfaction from many white parents who felt that their children were not being challenged, that they were not doing well academically. From the statistics available. Dr. Fitch could perceive that the gap between Negro and white children remained great, even though they were sitting next to each other.

Dr. Fitch realized that the Princeton Plan was merely a mechanical means of desegregating, that it was

only a beginning on the long road to true school integration. Certain problems still had to be met: many of his staff members were not fully committed to integration; a large number of people in the Negro community distrusted the intent of the schools to provide the best possible education for their children; many white parents continued to raise questions about grouping children heterogeneously. As a result, a few homogeneous groups were instituted. The professional staff sought to clarify with the Board of Education whether this division fully met the needs of children and whether it was consistent with stated policy.

Eager to fulfill its commitment to integration, the Board of Education sought help. It called in a study team of professors of elementary education from New York University to evaluate the progress being made by children in the heterogeneous classes. They were asked to make specific recommendations for improving classroom instruction. In short, the task given New York University was to find new and better ways of implementing the decision already made by the citizens and the School Board of Greenburgh—namely, to integrate the schools.

One of the first efforts of The Center for School Services Study Team was an analysis of racial distribution, age, intelligence, and achievement in grades kindergarten through six. They found that Negro and white children were fairly well distributed throughout each class and each grade; that the average group I.Q. test score was 12 to 15 points lower for Negro children than for white; that Negro children were achieving, on the average, about one grade level below the white children; and, furthermore, that the relative gain of Negro children from grade to grade was less than that of white children. Statistics showed that the number of Negro children of average intelligence who were under-achieving was far greater than the number of white children.

In view of these statistics, to which were added observations and discussions, the Study Team formulated recommendations about grouping practices and about the program of instruction.

With respect to grouping, the study "produced no evidence to indicate that the more able children were being penalized when compared against national norms." The results did show that "the Negro children, many from backgrounds where opportunities for cultural development were limited, were not achieving as well as the white children in the district." The Center for School Services strongly recommended that there should be no grouping in the elementary school on the basis of academic achievement alone. (Although this had been the official policy, some exceptions had been made.) They felt, too, that the practice of homogeneous grouping in the junior-high school should be reconsidered. They urged the maintenance of small class size in order to increase the use of individualized instruction. They also recommended that the administration and its special service personnel search for more reliable individual testing instruments to validate some of the scores recorded for many Negro youngsters.

The members of the Study Team also had much to say about enriching the learning experiences of children in the classroom. They advised making greater use of physical and human resources in the community and an increase in active, non-verbal learning experiences, as well as an increase in activities to stimulate creativity and imagination. Further, they felt that pupils should be given more opportunities for activities that teach democratic living. They called to the attention of teachers the fact that some children need more background experiences before they can learn, while others in the same classroom already know what they are being taught. To develop a good program of instruction, the Study Team recognized that more and better instructional materials had to be made available to all grades.

During its two years in Greenburgh, the New York University Center for School Services provided reports of studies such as the Higher Horizons program of New York City and a summary of research concerning grouping practices. The Center offered consultant services to anyone who asked for them—services of eminent men and women in the fields of elementary education. By request, any teacher could call in the N.Y.U. Team for classroom observations and consultations. Many of the recommendations cited in this report were derived during workshops involving Greenburgh teachers and administrators and members of the Study Team.

In feeding the N.Y.U. report back to the community, the Greenburgh Board of Education stated:

> We are in no small measure proud of the positive achievements of the District. . . . To the extent that these accomplishments have been substantiated by the N.Y.U. report, we are pleased. To the extent that certain lacks have been indicated, we have already instituted changes, and beyond that we have already approved administration plans for further changes.

The Board believed that the study was most beneficial in focusing the teachers' attention on the actual difficulties children faced in the learning process.

While the study was in process, Greenburgh asked for and received additional monetary support from New York State under Project ABLE. Funds from the New York State Education Department were distributed on a five-year basis to sixteen different cooperating public school districts. The purpose of the Project was to demonstrate practical solutions to the problems of educating pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds. Project ABLE was set up to allow local districts to develop their own unique plans to help educationally disadvantaged pupils in ways which best solved the local problems.

It was while the N.Y.U. Study Team was still operating in Greenburgh that the State Department of Education allocated its first-year Project ABLE subvention which was used to continue an intensive exploration of teachers' attitudes and children's deficiencies. The area of language development was pinpointed as crucial. Greenburgh therefore used its Project ABLE monies to improve the language skills of its entering kindergarten students.

Some of the positive changes that have occurred during the past few years since New York University did its study include:

1. Project ABLE itself, now in its fourth year. The results of this program are already being felt in the kindergarten which has modified its curriculum, and in the first and second grades, where Project ABLE children are now enrolled. (Greenburgh's use of Project ABLE funds is described in greater detail in Chapter III.)
2. A staff chosen for its commitment to integration.
3. New bi-racial instructional materials for every grade level.
4. Additional in-service training for all teachers.
5. A greater emphasis on individualization of instruction in each classroom.
6. Evaluation and revision of the curriculum.
7. Encouragement of academic excellence for all pupils.
8. More communication between parents and teachers.
9. A continuation of heterogeneous grouping.

An Educational

Chapter II

Task Force

IDEALLY, the child should be the focal point of any educational system. And because one aims to teach the whole child, the educational system must include the entire community. Thus, the home, the community, the Board of Education, the school administration, and, of course, the teachers are involved in creating optimum conditions for the quality education of all children.

A Far-Sighted School Board

"The important thing is to talk things out thoroughly; get everything out in the open."

A member of the District 8 School Board

The school board and the community which it serves talked things out before they arrived at the decision that the public schools were meant to serve all the children in Greenburgh, not only the educationally elite. The six-member school board is elected to office. At present, it consists of five men and one woman; four of the members are white, the others, Negro. For the most part, they are all progressive. Several of them are active in civil rights organizations.

Both of the Negro members of the Board are attorneys. One of them has stated the problem of integration this way:

"The first thing you have to do is to give white people the assurance that an integrated school will be a good school. In an all-white school, the parents will take for granted that a school is good. In an integrated school, you're on the defensive. You have to prove it."

In order to have the means to prove it, the school board has asked the electorate for money again and again. And the community has been willing to provide it. Since 1951, with one exception, Greenburgh has voted for every bond issue thus backing a six-million dollar expansion program. As a result, Greenburgh has the

highest tax rate of any community in the area, a valuation of $34.95 per thousand compared to the $28.50 for its neighbor, White Plains. The per capita expenditure for each pupil tops $1100 a year, more than $400 above the per capita expense in New York City.

Shortly after Woodlands High opened in 1961, the

neighboring school district of Hartsdale, which had no high school of its own, proposed a merger with Greenburgh. The proposition included the proviso that Hartsdale must accept Greenburgh's Princeton Plan. Each school district held a referendum. Greenburgh overwhelmingly supported the merger; Hartsdale decisively rejected it. It is generally assumed that the people of Hartsdale did not accept the merger because of Greenburgh's insistence on integration. Hartsdale is still without a high school of its own.

Because Greenburgh is only a school district, not a political entity, few political pressures plague the hard-working members of the Board of Education. Perhaps this divorce of politics from education is responsible for the progressive outlook.

The Board of Education has been responsible for getting and keeping administrators committed to integration. The administration, in turn, has hired staff members who would affirm and implement an ongoing program of integration.

An Administration with Vision

"I was very comfortable in the town where I was principal before I came here—too comfortable. Now I feel I'm making a contribution. I have a real sense of satisfaction about what I'm doing."

A principal in Greenburgh

The entire administrative staff of Greenburgh seems to have a deep, pervasive commitment to its job. Everyone, including Dr. George E. Fitch, the supervising principal of District 8, principals of the various schools, and the elementary supervisor, shares this basic feeling toward integration, although there is wide latitude in the way that each expresses his concern and follows

through on the stated philosophy of the school system.

Dr. Fitch speaks with the quiet drawl native to the Pennsylvania mountain town where he grew up. The manner in which Dr. Fitch describes his schools is impressive, conveying the excitement and the arduous labor that mark the competent administrator. A typical day for Dr. Fitch might include studying plans for a building addition, developing a research project, conferring with several staff committees, interviewing a prospective teacher, meeting with community representatives, and preparing a speech for a convention.

Back in 1957 when Dr. Fitch came to Greenburgh, the Board was not at all convinced that its sole function was to make policy. At that time, Board members took unto themselves such responsibilities as interviewing prospective teachers. In time, the roles of the Board and the administration became more clearly defined. Dr. Fitch now has a solid working relationship with the Board of Education.

A positive but humble man, Dr. Fitch feels sure that the Greenburgh integration plan is neither a fad nor a final solution. He does not even claim that it is original. What he is convinced of is that "with integration, all the children are getting a better deal." He is proud that school people from all over the country are beating paths to District 8's doorstep, anxious to see if they can incorporate anything that has been learned there into their own educational systems.

With the faint sound of kindergarten children at play drifting up from the floor below, Dr. Fitch and many of the other administrators are never far from the object of their work. One person who spends much of his time either downstairs with the kindergarteners or in the classrooms with youngsters in elementary grades is the Supervisor of Elementary Education.

A dark-haired, alert young man, the Supervisor of Elementary Education conducts the initial interviews with anyone seeking a job in the Greenburgh elementary schools. He reduces his search for new teachers to one sentence: "We are looking for commitment." He probes a potential teacher's feelings about integrated schools in general, about teaching a diverse population in particular, even about attitudes towards the civil rights movement. Without being militant or defensive, he states in his forthright manner, "We simply won't tolerate an anti-child feeling here."

In addition to the time spent on hiring personnel that will deliver on their promises to further the cause of school integration, the Elementary Supervisor coordinates Project ABLE, visits classrooms, searches for multi-racial materials, meets with small groups of teachers, and escorts the fascinated visitors who troop to Greenburgh in ever-increasing numbers.

Of the principals of the three elementary and one high school, two have been in the system longer than ten years; the other two came recently.*

The principal of the modern Juniper Hill School

*The kindergartens are presided over by a head teacher rather than a principal.

for first and second graders has had many years of experience as a primary school teacher in the Greenburgh schools. She is quietly enthusiastic about the Princeton Plan, describing how it allows more give-and-take among teachers because all the teachers of a given grade are under one roof. She finds that her teachers team up informally—for field trips, for special kinds of activities, even for occasional team teaching. Most important, the principal thinks that the pupils are given a better break because the Princeton Plan provides for many sections of each grade. This automatically gives the administration greater opportunity to shift pupils around temporarily or permanently.

You sense the sincerity of the principal of Old Tarreytown School for third and fourth graders when he says, "America is nourished by the feeling that everyone has the right to the same treatment. If these are just words, then we cannot survive as a democracy."

Relatively new to Greenburgh, this principal stresses communication among administrators, teachers, parents, and children. He himself has clearly communicated his acceptance of the youngsters in his school.

What disturbs this principal most is that because of a space shortage in his building many of the children are with him for the third grade only and must go on to another school for fourth grade. He hopes that a projected plan will add enough classrooms to his school to allow him to keep the youngsters for two years so he can get to know them better.

Bailey School, named for the former supervising

principal, Richard J. Bailey, is run by a highly articulate man who has been in the system for some twelve years. What does he look for in his interviews with prospective teachers? "Empathy and compassion for a wide variation in children. Respect and recognition for differences in behavior and achievement—and knowing how to deal constructively with these differences."

Bailey School houses mostly fifth and sixth grades (and a few fourths, left over from Old Tarreytown). The principal expresses particular concern about his teachers' attitudes toward low achievement. He finds that he must help some of the teachers gain a clearer understanding of the effects their own expectations have on children. If the teachers' goals are too high, the pupils are unduly frustrated. If they reach a point where they wonder why they should bother with pupils who cannot or will not achieve, this also defeats the purpose of raising levels. This principal feels that the basic ingredient needed by everyone in the schools is the acceptance of change as a positive, rather than a threatening force.

The principal of Woodlands High School is pleased with the atmosphere of purposeful activity in his five-unit junior-senior high school building. A recent arrival to Greenburgh, this principal finds great challenge and reward in his job as the head of a comprehensive high school. He encourages staff members to take a personal interest in their students. This honest attention from an adult gives many pupils a greater sense of worth and allows them to relate constructively to authority figures.

Special People Provide Special Services

"There's nothing in a democratic philosophy that says the needs of an educational elite come first, any more than the needs of an economic or cultural or political elite come first. A balance must be struck."

A Greenburgh school social worker.

The social worker who made this statement is a mature Negro who functions, at times, as a community trouble shooter. He deals with teachers, administrators, and parents in the triple role of community organizer, group worker, and case worker as he explains each group to the other and explains each to itself. If there is any one person in the Greenburgh schools who seems to be able to effect workable solutions among conflicting elements, it is this man. He is described by members of the community as perceptive, intuitive, and full of good common sense.

A person who commands trust and respect, he can talk to parents who are afraid their children will pick up "bad language"; transmit part of his own inner security to teachers who ask his help; and come to the aid of a principal who is in the middle of a racial dispute within his school. He is even approached by people in the community for solutions to petty frictions between neighbors.

He and the high school Student Activities Director conduct the bi-racial discussion groups which are designed to create interracial understanding and to clear up potential racial friction at Woodlands High School. The Student Activities Director is an intense man who wears an "Equal" button on the lapel of his tweed suit. The two men are ideologically on the same wave length, but operate in different ways. Their personalities seem to complement each other as they work with the pupils.

The Student Activities Director is seldom in his office because he moves around the building planning and executing a program that is designed for wide pupil participation. His prime concern is with the educational value of the enterprise rather than with the finished product (although the finished products do not appear to be of inferior quality). He finds the situation in Greenburgh both unique and professionally absorbing. He is particularly interested in the self-segregating tendencies of students, and with the class tensions within each racial group.

Another key pupil-personnel figure who functions only in the high school is the Director of Guidance. He and his staff keep a phenomenally busy schedule as they counsel youngsters for personal problems, for job placement, and for college selection. The guidance staff is instrumental in preparing individual study programs for each pupil as well as in helping teachers plan individualized instruction within the classroom. In deciding upon a pupil's program, many factors are taken into consideration: personal abilities and interests; course content and level of difficulty; and optimal utilization of the physical facilities of the school.

The school psychologists work throughout all the schools, from kindergarten through the twelfth grade. They cooperate with teachers and guidance staff. They observe, test, and talk with the youngsters who need special help. It is their feeling that in Greenburgh District 8, the white children have become more aware of the Negroes and the Negroes have become more aware of themselves. All in all, they find that integration has resulted in more personal freedom for everyone. They see their function as diagnosticians and staff consultants. Their emphasis is on knowing and understanding every child, not only the overtly problematic child, and on making their clinical insights available to the entire staff. Approximately half their time is spent in active consultation with parents, teachers and pupils; the other half is devoted to a variety of diagnostic procedures from classroom observations to formal individualized tests.

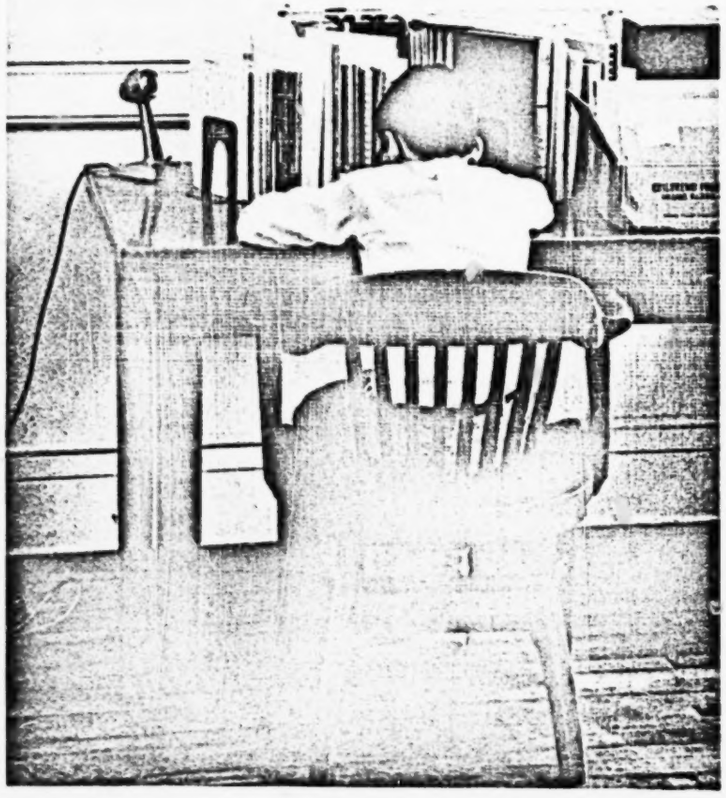
One of the psychologists discussed his impression of middle-class and lower-class Negro children. He feels that the middle-class Negro children often experience great difficulty in being accepted socially by lower-class Negro children. On the other hand, they are not entirely accepted by middle-class white children. Yet these Negro youngsters feel the intense middle-class pressures for academic achievement, even more than their white counterparts do. This psychologist finds that deprived Negro youngsters are perceptive, quick to size up

social situations, and have a great capacity for spontaneity and expressiveness.

In addition to the male social worker, there is a woman social worker—a young-looking mother of four —who devotes her time to the parents, teachers and children of the elementary schools. A poised Negro from North Carolina, she is extremely sensitive to the high degree of alienation she finds among the Negro boys and girls and their parents. She feels that the mistrust and suspicion of the white world which pervade the thinking of their parents reflects itself in the youngsters' tenseness and inability to interact with white students and teachers. It even affects their ability to profit from the school program. During the short time she has been in Greenburgh, much of her effort has gone into Project ABLE. Here she deals directly with the parents and children as well as with the teachers, psychologists, school nurses, language consultants, and the speech therapist.

The language consultant is primarily interested in the development of language skills, a key factor in academic achievement. It is he who is largely responsible for mapping out and putting into effect Greenburgh's version of Project ABLE (discussed in some detail from pg. 39 on)

Each member of the staff assigned to Pupil Personnel was hired to secure competent diagnostic and developmental programs in the total integration plan. There is much evidence to show that they are doing a far larger job than that originally envisioned. Green-



burgh has an unusually high percentage of specialists. All of them, including nurses, speech therapists and reading specialists, play an important role in promoting school integration.

Regardless of how effective the special services personnel and the administration are, their work would be for naught without the teaching staff, the heart of any school system. The administrative example of hard work and total commitment to educating children of diverse backgrounds is reflected in the attitude and work of the teachers.

The Keys to Success: The Teachers

"I work harder than I've ever worked before, but I'm not tired."

An elementary-school teacher in Greenburgh

Teachers in Greenburgh do work hard. But the attitudes of most of the personnel give them a perspective and a will-to-succeed.

Teacher applicants are interviewed for as long as five hours before their names are given to the Board of Education for approval. A typical applicant, seeking to teach in fifth or sixth grade, would be interviewed by the Supervisor of Elementary Education, by the principal of the R. J. Bailey School, and by Dr. Fitch. Because the teacher is the key figure in dealing directly with the students, the emphasis is on finding dedicated and skilled men and women to serve in the classroom.

Teachers new to the system are given an eight session orientation program which includes hearing speakers from the Board, touring the area, and gaining an intimate knowledge of all the Greenburgh schools. Teachers both new and old, usually serve on one or more committees. Committee assignments are based on the teacher's indicated concerns and each committee cuts across grade lines so that teachers get to know their colleagues from other schools. In addition to committee meetings, which are held once or twice a month, there is a weekly staff meeting in each school.

The school day itself is somewhat longer than average because teachers have to be in their classrooms when the first bus load arrives and stay until the last bus load leaves. Members of the staff are strongly encouraged to make contact with all parents, especially those who have been unable to come to the school. In addition, some of the teachers volunteer to help out in the Study Halls held after school for the benefit of those who need extra remediation.

What is the pay for this exhausting schedule? Certainly not the top of the Westchester County scale. A teacher, fresh out of school with a B.A., starts at $5500. Without further training, this same teacher can go up to $8990 in eleven steps. Those with an M.A. and without experience begin at $6100 and can reach $10,290. A Ph.D. starts at $7400 and can rise to a top salary of $12,790. A teacher who receives tenure after a three-year

probation period in Greenburgh, has proved his dedication and ability. The $290 added to his salary at the time is small compensation. At present, more than 55 per cent of the staff have tenure.

For many years, the administrators of the District 8 schools had to scour the countryside for teachers willing to work in Greenburgh. With Greenburgh's reputation now established, the school system has at least twelve applicants for each job. Many are willing to commute 40 or 50 miles a day each way for the privilege of teaching here. Student teachers from New York University, Sarah Lawrence, and other colleges clamor for the opportunity to "intern" in the district.

In Greenburgh, there is no ban on hiring teachers who have just completed college. For the coming year, one of the new teachers is a young woman who proved her excellence as a student teacher in Greenburgh. Teachers of all ages are hired. Mature and experienced men and women are welcome.

More than 15 per cent of the entire professional staff are Negroes. They are hired on the same basis as the white staff. One of the principals remarked that his Negro teachers relate well to children of both races. "They don't lean over backward to prove they aren't prejudiced," he declared. "Their more realistic attitudes influence their colleagues, too," he added.

The presence of Negro teachers allows Negro children to identify with members of their own race; it allows Caucasian youngsters the opportunity to see a Negro in a position of authority. One Negro teacher

recounts how the mother of a new (white) pupil from the South brought her son to the door of her room, and then shrank back, muttering, "How can *my* child be in there?" During the year, the teacher worked to win the child and his mother over and they no longer question the situation.

There is a surprisingly high percentage of men in the elementary schools—almost one third of the teachers from the third through the sixth grades. The high school has more men than women on its staff. On the elementary level, about one third of the teachers of special subjects (music, art, and gym) are men.

Although the greater portion of the teachers come from the metropolitan area of New York, many have gained experience in states as far away as Florida, Illinois, and Arizona. One is from Sweden.

Visiting the classrooms and talking to the teachers leaves the trained observer with a number of generalized impressions. Everywhere, one gets a feeling of sincere dedication, of genuine concern for each individual

child, of teacher cooperation, of pupil-to-pupil respect. One sees that each teacher is given wide latitude to express himself within the framework of providing excellent education for his pupils. From the eggs incubating in one kindergarten room to the guinea pigs and white mice in an upper-grade room, one sees teachers concerned with biology. One gets the impression that in the neatest rooms there often is little evidence of creative teaching and learning. Where more individualized teaching is taking place, there is more likely to be some degree of disorder.

There is great variation in the way teachers of pre-integration days have accepted change. A number of the teachers simply left the system when they found themselves confronted with classes in which approximately one-third of the pupils were Negro. Others, like the head teacher of the kindergarten, have been able to adjust by virtue of their own personal flexibility and their deep concern for the needs of all children.

The following comments of one teacher indicate a high degree of inner conflict and confusion:

> "I couldn't even tell you how many children of each race are in my class. But I insist they must all be OBEDIENT so they can learn."
>
> "Negro parents want their children to behave. It's harder to discipline the white children because their parents will back them, rather than the school."
>
> "New teachers don't want help. I've learned not to offer any."
>
> "With the old principal, at least I knew where I stood. It was very different."

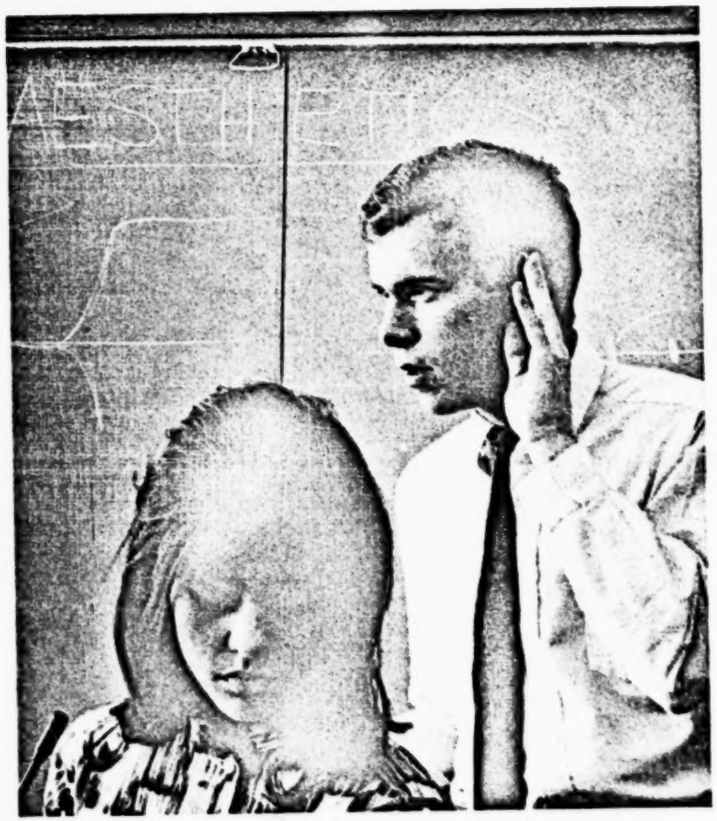
Others on the staff reacted differently:

> "You can't just put children side by side like tools in a room. I use a positive approach. I often say things like 'We all have problems' or 'We all like to paint.' I stress differences too, and I tell them that people visit our school to see how different we are. I make a point of saying. 'We all go to school together.' "

Another teacher broke up a fight and name-calling among some Negro and white children. After tempers had cooled, she improvised a simple object lesson on race. She held up a clear drinking glass and an amber drinking glass and asked for comparisions. "Can you drink from both of these glasses?" she asked her first graders. "What happens if either of these glasses is dropped?" She chose this way to make her point that people are basically alike.

A second-grade teacher believes that the basic climate in the room matters more than specific lessons in tolerance. She is convinced that children in her class who have been together for at least two years accept racial differences without question. However, when a boy came in from another district at the beginning of the year, this teacher found that she had to speak to him privately about his prejudiced behavior. Later she helped him to overcome his bias by making him the "buddy" of a Negro boy who came in later in the year and had to be "shown the ropes."

Sensitivity to other kinds of differences is illustrated by the second-grade teacher with a physically handi-



capped youngster in her class. Although this child is in a wheel chair, he is so well accepted by his classmates that they even run races with him, adjusting their "running" to walking, in order to give him a fair chance!

A third-grade teacher explains how she employs the technique of role-playing to point up a cultural difference which had led to actual fighting in the cafeteria. The specific situation revolved around several Negro girls who insisted on picking up their meat and vegetables with their fingers. A role-playing session helped these girls understand why some of their white classmates found their table manners so shocking.

A fourth-grade teacher who finds Greenburgh "a lovely place to work" has a large chart taped on the wall outside her classroom door. At the top is printed the question: "What is the Value of Education and Training?" Underneath is plenty of blank space for free response. Some of the following "answers" indicate that many youngsters have a most pragmatic attitude towards education:

"Get into a higher bracket plus get enough money for special job training."
"To learn more and more from school."
"You learn to do the better things in life."
"So when you grow up you will get a job and get money."

Another fourth-grade teacher says he had been teaching in a private school for many years. "Then," he says, "I began to realize that most of my students were sent to private school to escape integration in the public schools. That's when I decided to look for a position somewhere else."

A very young-looking sixth-grade teacher was overheard in the lunchroom arranging a game period with the teacher of a class of mentally-retarded pupils.*

*A state-supported class with pupils whose I.Q.'s are 50-75. This class is housed in R. J. Bailey School.

"My kids seem to look down on yours. I'd like them to get to know yours better so they'll get over this feeling."

A parent who observed in the schools before buying a home in the district, described the following incident. In one classroom, a Chinese girl was teaching her classmates Chinese. When questioned, the teacher explained that the child had refused to come to school after a long illness. By giving the youngster a brief daily opportunity to instruct her friends in Chinese, the teacher had provided her with a sense of worth as well as with a definite incentive to attend school. "I was sold on Greenburgh after I saw this scene," affirms the parent. "I knew the teachers really cared."

The chairman of a department in the high school is convinced that the teachers here are unusual. He admits that he is sometimes frustrated trying to help youngsters to function to the best of their intellectual abilities; but he counterbalances this frustration with his knowledge of the tremendous gains made in closing the achievement gap. "The schools can't do the whole job," he says. "It's housing and jobs and the whole economic picture. Education is just one way to break out. What goes on in the school is not always reflected in the outside world. Many Negro children still despair and can't believe in the future."

With the kind of commitment with which Greenburgh teachers face their task, it is hardly surprising that the annual teacher turnover is less than 15%. The teachers' morale is high because they believe in what they are doing.

A Living Statement of Philosophy

This belief is expressed in the following statement of philosophy, to which everyone on the staff subscribes, both in theory and in practice:

The official Board of Education philosophy for this school system states that our schools shall meet the needs and interests and challenge the abilities of each individual child within an integrated school. This statement has been made again and again until it was assumed it was known and accepted by every employee. It appears this may have been an erroneous assumption.

There must be a common understanding and interpretation of the District philosophy if the objectives it is designed to effect are to be achieved. More important than understanding and interpretation of this philosophy is the commitment of each person to it.

Perhaps the first term to be clarified is integration. As used in the statement of philosophy this term means much more than the distribution of bodies among classes. It means that the value and worth of each individual is recognized, respected and utilized in making up the whole. It means that

the individual has a position of self-respect and self-realization in this group. It means that the individual makes worthwhile contributions to the group and is accepted and respected by the group. It means that each individual is considered because of what he is or can be and not because of his environment. It means that the individual is not "pitied," "contained," "suffered," or "tolerated."

Meeting the needs and interests of children is an all-inclusive statement. Each child needs to develop a self-image which is satisfying to himself and acceptable to society. Each child needs to feel that he is accepted and not rejected by his peers. Each child needs to experience successes and to be able to cope with and accept his failures. Each child needs attention to his physical well-being and an understanding of his psychological and emotional make up. The interests of children vary. Each child needs guidance and encouragement in developing a variety of interests which will contribute both to his own present and future goals and satisfaction and to his group. Some interests must be aroused, some broadened, some controlled, some redirected in terms of the child's goals in life. In some instances the establishing of individual goals must precede the development of interests.

The abilities of children differ in quality and in kind. Many times they are latent or depressed. All qualities and kinds of abilities are to be determined, developed and challenged by the school. No one type of abilities is to be exploited at the expense of developing less obvious or latent ones. The design of curriculum, organization, activities and program must be geared in this direction.

The American Nation in playing its present and future role on the world stage must practice its doctrine of the worth of the individual and must release and utilize the talents, abilities and energies of each person if it is to gain and retain the respect and confidence of the peoples of the world and preserve its way of life at home. The philosophy of Greenburgh District No. 8 schools is in harmony with this national purpose. In meeting the needs and interests and challenging the abilities of all children we are using the broad interpretation briefly outlined above. We are assuming that each child has needs, interests and abilities which must be determined, developed and directed both for the happiness, satisfaction, productivity and success of the individual and for the benefit of our democratic society. Our measure of success in attaining this philosophy is the degree to which we succeed in aiding each child in becoming everything he is potentially capable of being.

Greenburgh School District No. 8
Statement of Philosophy
Warburg Campus, Hartsdale, N.Y., September 29, 1963.

A Total Program of Integration

Chapter III

NO matter how well intentioned the staff may be, they cannot do an adequate job of providing quality education in an integrated school system unless they take into consideration the achievement gap between Negro and white children. They may approach this task through their grouping practices, through upgrading certain youngsters, and through a rich and varied curriculum.

There seems to be general agreement that a direct relationship exists between verbal fluency and socio-economic status. Those who are less verbal are usually also poor. Verbal fluency is a major factor determining scores on ability tests. Thus, ability grouping based on test scores may well perpetuate the segregated pattern of the community within the school itself. Greenburgh District 8 consciously groups pupils heterogeneously to counteract this pattern.

In order to close the achievement gap between Negro and white children, it is essential to give extra help to ameliorate the adverse effects of a biased society and of unfavorable conditions in some of the homes. Greenburgh has taken advantage of state aid to upgrade its disadvantaged pupils through Project ABLE.

All children derive benefits from a meaningful, rich curriculum backed by well-chosen materials. Greenburgh is in the process of organizing a curriculum that makes sense in today's world with the use of a wide variety of appropriate teaching aids.

Grappling with Grouping

"With heterogeneous grouping, there are no more status classes or status teachers."

A school psychologist in Greenburgh

Inevitably, children perceive the meaning of labels applied to them, whether the labels are in terms of

Bluebirds and Robins, numbers 1 through 6, or letters A through F. The children, their teachers, and their parents are automatically convinced that the "bright class" will learn more than the "dumb class." The climate of learning in a low status class is usually discouraging, while the atmosphere in the high-ability class is prone to be overly-competitive, creating a different kind of unhealthy attitude toward learning. This manifests itself in feelings of superiority, attitudes of condescension, and anxiety over grades. A truly integrated school must have heterogeneous grouping; otherwise the culture gap foreordains that most Negro children will be segregated within the school.

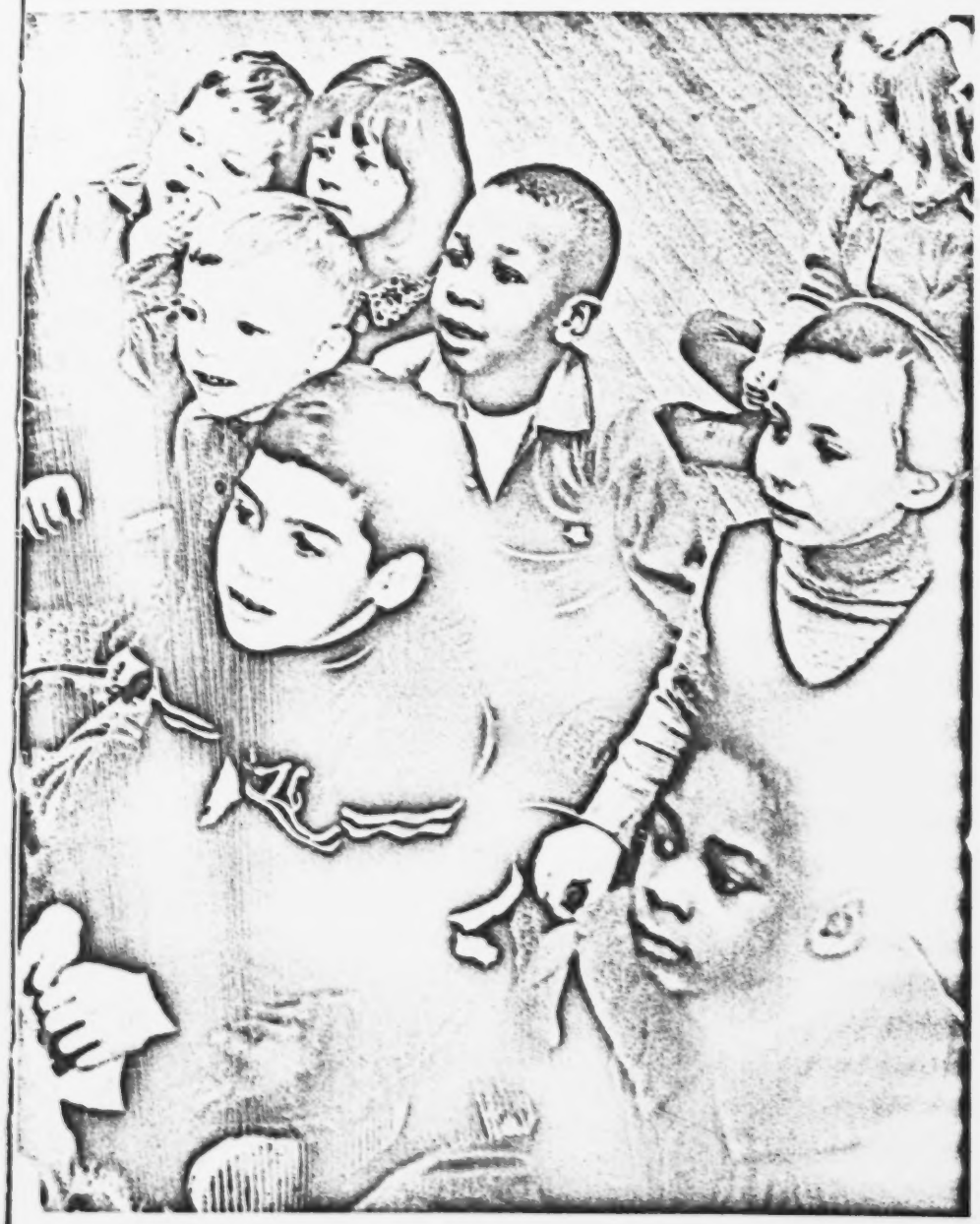
Way Back When: In 1951 when the Greenburgh schools were desegregated, the District 8 Board of Education formally abolished the administrative organizational device of ability grouping in the elementary grades. Ten years later, the New York University Study Team looked at the situation and reported that this policy was not strictly adhered to. They pointed out that where class assignments were made on the basis of academic achievement alone, racial segregation was the result. They went on to say:

> There is no evidence that grouping practices designed to reduce the range of abilities within a classroom promote greater growth.... There is no greater impetus to learning than how youngsters feel about themselves. ...grouping practices... must not provide opportunities for children to consider themselves less worthy.

While New York University strongly favored heterogeneous grouping, they also recognized the need for moderately-sized classes with opportunities for individualized instruction. Because intelligence and ability tests serve as the basis for grouping, they specifically recommended tests that did not favor the middle-class white child. The N.Y.U. staff hoped that the administration of the Greenburgh schools would reconsider its grouping practices at all levels, including the junior and senior high schools where more rigid ability grouping is likely to occur. Granting that homogeneous grouping may seem to make teaching easier, they recommended organizing the school to suit the needs of the children rather than organizing the children to suit the convenience of the institution. "It does not necessarily follow," they wrote, "that organizations designed to simplify the act of teaching through reduced ranges will enhance children's learning."

The Elementary School Groups for Diversity: The Greenburgh schools acted on these recommendations to make each class in the elementary schools representative of the total composition of the school district. This policy has come to mean that each second-grade section, for example, is a cross-section of *all* pupils in the second grades, by sex, race, social status, and achievement. Statistically, this may mean that each of the second grades has 4 Negro boys, 8 white boys, 4 Negro girls, and 9 white girls.

Actually, in the second grades during the 1963-64



school year, the ratio in each of the ten sections was 8 or 9 Negro pupils to 15 or 16 white pupils. According to teacher estimates, there was an average of 5 Negroes and 1 white pupil of low socio-economic background and 4 Negroes and 14 white pupils of middle to high socio-economic background in each class. Furthermore, the intelligence quotient ranges in each class looked something like this:

2 children	**over 130 I.Q.**
6 children	**110 to 130 I.Q.**
7 children	**100 to 110 I.Q.**
6 children	**90 to 100 I.Q.**
3 children	**80 to 90 I.Q.**
1 child	**70 to 80 I.Q.**

In this distribution, it is apparent that the average I.Q. is between 100 and 110. Many teachers complain when confronted with a range of intelligence quotients from superior or genius categories to the dull normal or even borderline mentality. How do Greenburgh teachers feel about it?

With a maximum of 25 pupils, the teachers do their best to provide highly individualized instruction for each child. One young second-grade teacher, who had previously taught in Harlem, put it this way: "Here we have smaller classes and more specialists to help us. We accept each child as a person, and, as a result, the

children are nicer to each other. What we had in Harlem wasn't really ability grouping, it was discipline grouping."

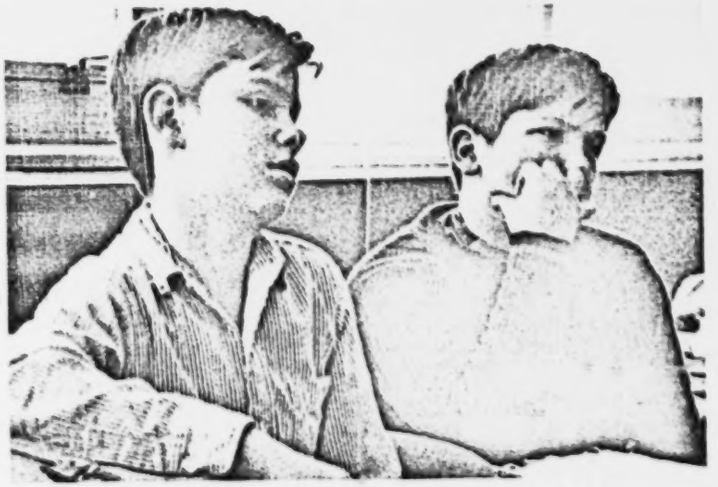
A first-grade teacher agreed that it was harder to teach a heterogeneous group. "Sure, it takes more time and planning," she said. "But it's well worth the effort."

One fourth-grade teacher is so concerned about how each child views himself that she does her best to avoid grouping within her class room. She works long hours to help each child proceed at his own pace in every subject. She plans for individual and committee reports in subjects such as reading, social studies, and science, and encourages creative work in the language arts.

The vast majority of the elementary-school teachers *do* group their children for reading and arithmetic. But they are careful to label the task to be accomplished rather than the children themselves. A teacher in a second-grade classroom felt that certain children needed further help in comprehending one of their first algebra lessons—5 plus 4 equals 6 plus ( ). She called them up in a small group to explain how to find the solution to this problem: By giving sincere encouragement to these students, the teacher was able to make them feel proud of their success in learning a new method of approaching unknown quantities, not ashamed of having been singled out for remediation. Nor were these children the ones who always needed extra tutoring in arithmetic. By using flexible grouping this teacher works with different groupings of youngsters, according to the specific problem. Thus there might be one group on linear measurements, one on spatial concepts, etc.

Flexibility manifests itself in many ways as the Greenburgh schools continue to examine the best possible means of placing individual children. Neither "skipping" nor retention is taboo, if the school and the parents feel that either would be most beneficial for a specific child.

Last September, Joan, a withdrawn girl from a dis-



advantaged home, began kindergarten. She seemed unable to relate to her teacher or to the other children. In fact, she spoke not a word to anyone. After months of work both individually and in small groups, Joan emerged from her shell. By spring, the teacher and the Project ABLE worker were convinced that Joan was really prepared to enter the more structured situation of first grade. Yet the school was forced to take a second

look when Joan was totally unable to perform on her group reading-readiness tests. The school psychologist, the teacher, and two Project ABLE workers are re-evaluating the child. Then they will confer to decide whether to retain Joan in kindergarten or to promote her to first grade. In reaching a final decision, they will ask themselves questions like these:

Will Joan be able to learn to read next year if she goes into first grade?

How will Joan's family react if she is retained in kindergarten?

What will retention in kindergarten do to Joan's feelings about herself?

The outcome will ultimately be based on what is felt to be best for Joan.

The critics of heterogeneous grouping often question whether children suffer at both extremes of the ability range. A policy of heterogeneous grouping does not deny the necessity of special provisions for these children. For instance, this past year, sixth graders gifted in mathematics met together for advanced study.

Only a few years ago, the principal of the 5-6 grade school tried placing his worst emotional problems into a separate class. "I should have known better," he admitted, "because I myself originally came to Greenburgh to teach disturbed children. Well, it didn't work the first time or the second either. These children interacted on each other in a destructive way. So we went back to completely heterogeneous grouping. You know," he said reflectively, "the bright kids pull the rest of the group along. The several research studies on the subject indicate that it is of no particular benefit to these boys and girls of higher ability to be separated from other students."

The elementary supervisor would carry this statement one step farther. He feels that not only is there great advantage for the dull and the bright child to have contact and interaction with one another; there are also benefits when children of different social classes and cultural milieu are placed together. He states: "Some of the disadvantaged children have reality-oriented strength of survival and independence which middle-class youngsters might well learn."

The High School Groups by Self-Selection and Vocational Aspiration: While ability grouping on the elementary level occurs only within the classroom, the junior-senior high school classes are more apt to be formed along interest and ability lines. Thus even the secondary school organization, which is still basically traditional, has no fixed grouping.

Obviously the problems of a comprehensive high school are somewhat different from those of an elementary school. In high school, mastery of subject matter becomes increasingly important. Furthermore, the high school must prepare some students to go on to college and others to find jobs immediately after graduation.

With this in mind, the high school does provide an advanced placement, or accelerated program in science, mathematics, and foreign languages. It purposely

groups for wide ranges in most other areas. Both the junior and senior high schools are constantly trying new ways of grouping so that every student is exposed to a healthy climate of learning. The secondary school is considering the elimination of special tracks. Within the present framework, however, programs are individualized and class offerings are varied.

In addition to the accelerated classes, three other programs have been offered: a Regents program, preparing young people for college; a general program for those who expect to terminate their education after 12th grade; and a program for those with low reading levels (known as the "E" group). The principal of the high school points out that a pupil may be involved in several types of programs at the same time, depending on his interests and motivations. The principal feels that, if anything, some are motivated to take too challenging a program.

After much consideration, the chairmen of the several high-school departments advocated the elimination of the E group. "It's discouraging for such a group to be together," explained one of them. This joint decision will become part of the new grouping policy for next year, when there will be only three groups. The former "E" students will be given special help wherever they are placed. To begin with, each boy or girl with a low reading score will be scheduled for a minimum of seven periods of English a week in order to get extra reading practice. (Most students take five periods of English per week.) If seven periods are not sufficient to effect a change, these students will then be scheduled for nine periods of English.

The guidance director explains how he and other members of the staff work with any youngster who shows promise—even one who appears to be retarded. As an example, when Betty first entered high school, she appeared hostile and slow to learn. She was thought to be a potential drop-out. One of the teachers felt that Betty had far more ability than she was giving herself credit for. As a result of remediation and an enriched program, as well as participation in special bi-racial discussion groups, Betty not only remained to graduate from high school, but she expects to enter teacher-training next fall.

Not all the parents in the community agree that the school should group across ability lines. Said one mother, whose basic attitude towards integration is, "It can't be helped":

> "I think the teacher spends too much time with the low level kids. Children progress better when they are not mixed."

In spite of occasional opposition like this, the philosophy of the high school, as stated by its faculty, is expressed in terms of meeting the needs, interests, and abilities of individual children by individualized scheduling and not by fixed grouping. It is, of course, understood that these needs are met within the context of such realistic outside pressures as college boards, scholarship examinations, and Regents requirements. The general policy of the entire school system is that

of *inclusion* rather than of *exclusion*. The school is concerned with its "holding power" and is devising ways of keeping its population. It is a stated policy to find means of educating all pupils with mental, physical and emotional handicaps within the regular classroom so long as neither the handicapped child nor his fellow-students is in jeopardy.

As the school psychologist sums it up, "There is little to substantiate homogeneous grouping. What makes a difference is curriculum and, of course, staff. And what makes a school truly integrated is closing the achievement gap while appreciating the cultural differences."

Project ABLE has concentrated on doing just that, and, encouragingly, with some success.

Project ABLE: Saturation Plus Integration

"Project ABLE is not really magic at all. It just focuses on kids."

Greenburgh language consultant

The N.Y.U. Study Team was at least partially responsible for the advent of Project ABLE. In 1961, an entire decade after Greenburgh had desegregated its schools, the average achievement level of Negro children was found to be approximately one grade (year) below the grade level achieved by the district's white children. The following table shows the actual differences in achievement between Negro and white children during the 1960-61 school year:

Grade	Average Negro Achievement	Average White Achievement	Difference
1	2.0	2.3	.3
2	2.1	3.0	.9
3	3.2	4.2	1.0
4	4.1	5.2	1.1
5	5.1	5.6	.5
6	*not available*	5.7	*not available*

Several inferences can be drawn from this table. First, the achievement gap seems smallest when the children begin school. Second, the gap seems to widen as the children progress through the grades. Third, the relative gain of Negro children from grade to grade is less than that of white children.

The N.Y.U. group felt strongly that the differences in achievement and in measured intelligence between Negro and white children were not innate, but due to a cultural gap. They noted particularly that "especially in the area of language development, the kindergarten . . . can play an important role in preparing children of limited backgrounds for school experiences."

At this time, the New York State Legislature had fortunately set aside money to help school districts improve their programs of education for children from deprived backgrounds. The monies for Project ABLE were available from the State Department of Education. It is greatly to the credit of the Board of Education in

Greenburgh that they not only took advantage of the opportunity for state aid: but by the end of the second year of the project, they were matching the state money with nearly twice as much of their own money. In fact, they were spending more than three times as much of their own money as the next highest Project ABLE district in the state. (There are sixteen such districts altogether.)

Year Number One: The schools, the social worker, and more especially the elementary supervisor who is in charge of Project ABLE, were all ready to tackle the problem of providing compensatory education for children of limited backgrounds. The next question was, "Who were the children?" and "How would the school know them when they saw them?" The first year of the Project was largely spent exploring:

> Just what were the achievement levels in each grade?
> What methods of grouping helped disadvantaged youngsters?
> Could (and did) teachers equate Negroes with poverty, with cultural deprivation, with low class?
> What were the over-all functions of the school?

Hour after hour, the entire teaching and administrative staff discussed these troublesome but fundamental questions. Teachers identified and commented on students they felt might benefit from Project ABLE.

"No books or magazines at home" indicated certain cultural lacks within a home.

"Child has to stay at home to take care of younger siblings" pointed up the economic status of the family.

"Mother came to school and wanted to beat child up as a way of handling unfavorable school report."

Other comments by teachers reflected on the child's performance on standardized tests. Still others indicated unusual family relationships. The most important

single factor in the different cultural patterns that emerged from these comments was a deficiency in language development.

On the basis of what they found out from this year of exploration, those intimately involved in Project ABLE felt that it was most appropriate to begin an action program with the children who would begin kindergarten the following September. The assumption was that the earlier and longer a child was exposed to an intensive program, the more fully he could respond to what the school had to offer.

Year Number Two: In May, 1962, when the kindergarten children registered, more attention than usual was focused on the answers given on the interview form, as well as on the parents and children themselves. During registration, many of the mothers from lower class homes whose occupation was housework, when asked for their names, responded with only their given name. Their own self-concept was such that the use of "Mrs." seemed out of place. This kind of response was one clue to Project ABLE placement.

Four months later, when the new school year began, the teachers, the social worker, the psychologist, and the language consultant observed each class, trying to pick up further clues to identify the children who most needed Project ABLE.

Little could be guessed from the enthusiastic attitude and neat appearance of all the children entering kindergarten. But other signs did appear. Project ABLE children seldom felt free to experiment with the toys and materials in the classroom. Furthermore, they often failed to respond to a direct verbal communication. "Put your clothing away now," the teacher would say. Some children would find such a command foreign to them. They were not trying to disobey; but they

would need to look around to see what their classmates were doing before they would hang up their own coats. In addition to a limited vocabulary, many of these children appeared easily distracted and hyperactive, "into everything," as one teacher put it.

Concurrent with classroom observations, the social

worker began making visits to the homes of the children who seemed to be adapting least well to the school environment. The school wanted to know as much about the youngsters as possible.

Five weeks of observation passed, and the language consultant began administering a battery of diagnostic tests to those who seemed to need help, especially in the area of language development. He also tested some of the children from middle-class backgrounds so that he could analyze his results on a comparative basis.

All the tests were designed for the purpose of diagnosing the problems of disadvantaged children. The test for auditory discrimination asks the child to tell if he heard the same word twice or if he heard two different words. (The tester says "pat-pet," and the child responds "same" or "different.") In some cases, the child did not understand the concept of same and different; in other instances, he could not distinguish the differences in sound. Of the 40 disadvantaged children tested, 35 were below the normal range in auditory discrimination.

Certain items in an "orientation scale" distinguished the middle-class from the disadvantaged group. Few of the deprived youngsters knew the word "thumb" when the tester held out this finger. Few of them could write their names. Few of them would begin to count until the tester encouraged them by counting with them.

Two tests which elicited no basic differences in response from children of differing social classes were the Memory and Recall Test (repeating digits and sentences) and a Comprehension Test (answering common sense questions such as "What must you do when you are cold?") Nor was there any great difference in ability shown when the children were asked to name words with the aid of a visual clue (the labeling section of the Binet Intelligence Test).

A much more discriminating test was entitled "Categories." Here, the pupil was asked to give the abstract or general word that went with a particular word. Thus for "dog," he should reply "animal," for "bed" the correct response would be "furniture." The middle-class children gave appropriate, rapid answers. In category after category, the disadvantaged children lacked these fundamental concepts.

On the Body Image Scale, where children were asked to point to 34 parts of their bodies, one fourth to one half of the disadvantaged pupils had trouble finding their nostrils, their wrists, their palms, their foreheads, and their cheeks.

On the Word Association Test, these same pupils were able to name fewer words per minute than middle-class children. The standardized Basic Vocabulary Test indicated that culturally deprived youngsters were functioning far below their chronological age. The findings of the Draw-A-Man Test pointed up that these children lacked a positive self-concept and possessed a low maturation level.

Throughout the testing, it was found that the disadvantaged child was afraid to experiment or guess. He tended to give up easily. His responses were often de-

layed until he could be made to feel more comfortable. He was simply not attuned to school-oriented questions. In general, he needed a great deal of encouragement. The tester found that he could give partial encouragement by recognizing good responses, even when they were not totally correct.

Once the diagnostic battery had been administered and evaluated, the language consultant began working with groups of four children at a time. He met with these small groups, picked at random from those now identified as Project ABLE children, every school day, for about fifteen minutes at a time. He read to the children; he played games to get them to hear and see differences; he took them on monthly trips. More than that, he worked on getting them to trust him so that they would be free to learn.

Success was often dramatic. Jimmy, for instance, seemed completely passive and submissive at first. Then he became highly aggressive. One day he blurted out hostilely, "You're bald." The consultant answered, "You're right. I wish I weren't." Not having hostility returned was a new experience for Jimmy. Only a month later, he begged, "Can't I go home with you for Christmas?" The social worker expressed the Project ABLE children's sense of identification with the consultant in this way: "They think he is a Negro." (He is, in fact, Caucasian.)

Shortly after Christmas, he tried simplifying his task by working with children who had similar deficiencies. After only a few weeks of this, he switched back to the random or heterogeneous grouping which he found more effective.

Project ABLE children received additional help from the school librarian who told them stories and encouraged them to take books home to show their parents.

All through the year, the social worker went to the homes of the parents. She visited each Project ABLE home at least four or five times; some she returned to as many as fifteen times. In speaking to the parents, the social worker felt that they were "interested both in the school program and in their particular child. They all wanted their children in Project ABLE and agreed to become involved in group meetings.... The parents trust the school to do the right thing by their children and to make the best decisions in their interest."

The social worker's function was to help with individual problems and to encourage groups of the parents to meet with her. At the group meetings, she interpreted the school program and tried to assure the parents by word and deed that the school really accepted all people. The groups met in churches, not in the school, where many parents felt defensive and ill-at-ease. After six or seven sessions, the social worker was able to break down many of the defensive attitudes and get through even to the more alienated parents.

The parents were concerned about doing the right thing for their children. They wanted to know what they could do at home to help them learn. The social worker suggested that they hold conversations with their youngsters, that they respond to questions with

more than monosyllabic answers. She recommended that the parents make it a practice to read to their children and tell them stories.

After a time, the parents began sharing their feelings about themselves. They related their hopes and aspirations for their children. They became freer to criticize the school. In short, they proved that in spite of poverty, broken homes, and other overwhelming problems, they had a basic interest in the welfare of their children.

Back at the school, the language consultant held workshops for the teachers after the children had left for the day. He helped the teachers examine their own ways of operating and their attitudes towards children, telling them how he himself had to take an objective look at some of his own value judgments about such matters as cleanliness and hyper-activity. He interpreted Project ABLE, in part, as a way that children could work through anger and other anti-social feelings so that they could begin to learn. Individual conferences were held with teachers, and he invited them in to observe his classes.

By the end of the year, the pupils themselves seemed less hesitant, more sure of themselves. Retesting with the same tests as had been used in September, the results were phenomenal. There was now little delay in response. Vocabulary had increased. The gap between Project ABLE children and middle-class youngsters had closed considerably. On the basis of the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Tests (which uses the identification of pictures as an index vocabulary level), intelligence quotients rose, in some instances, as much as 45 points. Three actual I.Q. scores are listed below:

	September	June
Child #1	95	123
Child #2	79	105
Child #3	65	105

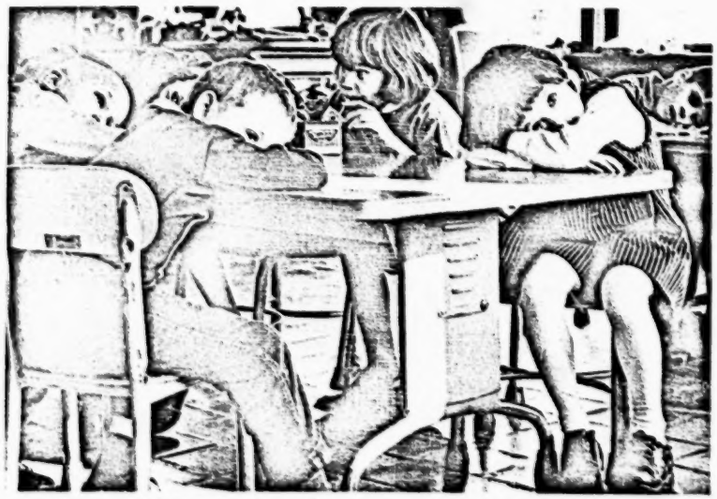
Given the usual tests and no further remediation, one of these children might have gone through school labeled RETARDED.

Year Number Three: As Project ABLE went into its third year, the kindergarteners progressed to first grade and new kindergarten children entered school. What was done with the new kindergarten children? How did Project ABLE first graders succeed in their more structured set-up?

Following up the last year's kindergarteners into first grade, the consultant began by observing the children in their classrooms. Then he started working, individually or in small groups, with those who seemed destined to have reading problems. His purpose was to reinforce what had been taught in class. Later in the year, he worked in the classrooms as a second teacher, spending an average of 1½ hours a week in each room.

Initially, the first-grade teachers expressed disappointment that Project ABLE could not supply ready-

made answers to all their problems. In time, however, they realized that there was a difference in the children who had received remediation. "They appear more open." "They are enthusiastic about learning." "They go to books." These were some of the comments heard. One teacher felt that Project ABLE had helped Negro children relate to white authority figures so that they could be free to learn.



At the same time, the entire curriculum was revamped as result of Project ABLE. Much of what had been accomplished in small groups the preceding year was incorporated into the regular program. The revisions took place as kindergarten teachers prepared to gear their activities toward developing reading, arithmetic, and science concepts and skills.

In one kindergarten class, a teacher questions a child who is making an American flag. "How many stars do you have?" she asks. "How many stripes?" Teacher and pupil discuss together the correct number of stars and stripes. They conclude that his paper isn't large enough to squeeze in each part of the flag.

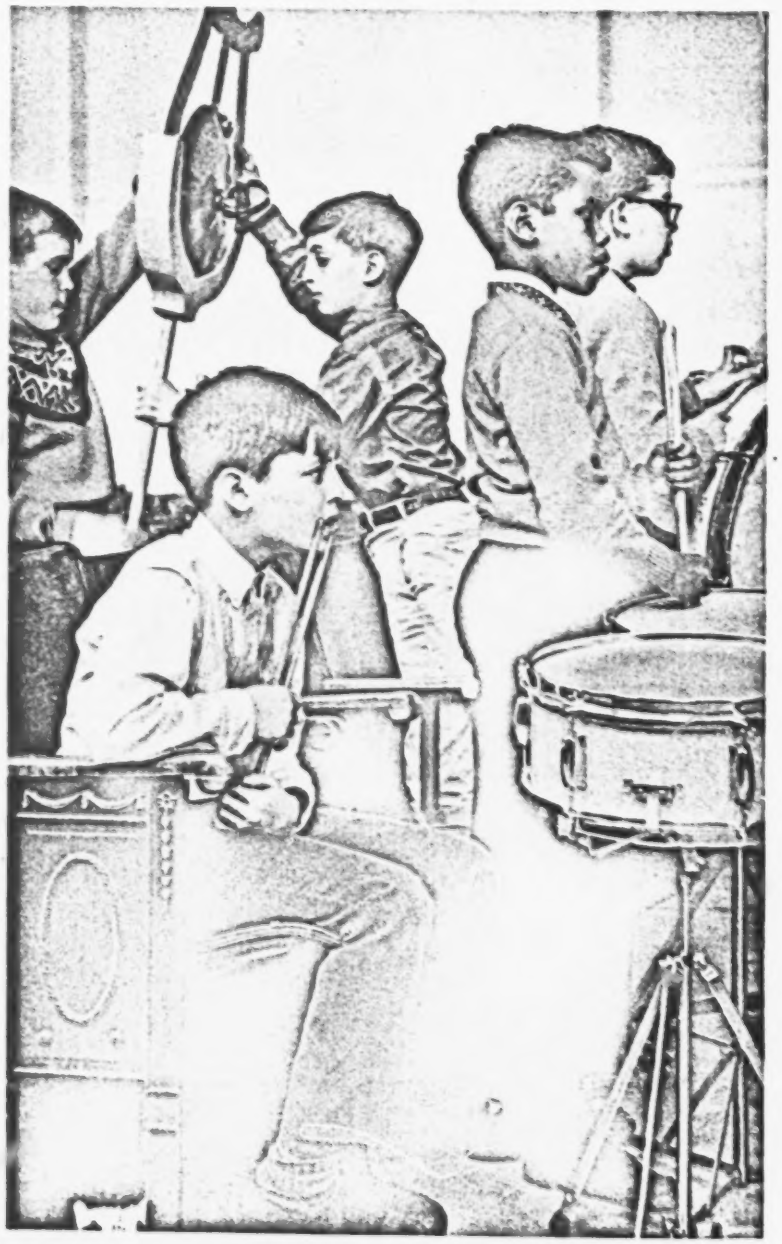
Another teacher asks a child to count how many blocks he is playing with. "What do you call this shape?" she questions. In both instances, the teachers are developing mathematical concepts.

A chart in another kindergarten announces: "We Know Our Addresses" and a number of children have printed their names below.

The librarian is working with one class. This week the children are selecting books to take home. Next week there will be a story hour.

The teacher in another kindergarten is reading a book to the pupils. It is a colorfully-illustrated fantasy based on the names of ocean life such as seahorses, etc. The teacher comes to the word "rescue" and asks a child to explain the meaning of the word. Occasionally she will stop reading to ask questions about what has been said. She asks for a definition of a "school of fish." When she comes to the hermit crab, she wants a definition of "hermit." One youngster suggests that a hermit lives in a cabin. "Yes," Miss S. goes on, using the partially correct answer, "He may live in a cabin, but more important, he lives alone."

The school provides two special sessions a week for those kindergarteners identified as part of Project ABLE. The woman who works with these youngsters



finds that they are flattered to be chosen to leave their classrooms. Far from being a stigma, the children consider this a privilege. The Project ABLE teacher works on language, on rhyming, on abstract concepts, on colors. She feels that she cannot take anything for granted.

"What is this?" she asks a group of four children. She shows them the picture of a hammer. Only one child answers correctly. "What noise does it make?" Now all of the children pound on their wooden chairs with their fists.

The next group of children come in now. George slides all the way across the room as if he were coming into home plate. He is excited about the inchworm he was just playing with. The teacher spends a few moments talking to him about worms. Then she shows him the picture of a dog. "It's a horse," insists George. "It's a *big* dog," corrects the teacher, adding "It's so big you thought it was a horse."

During the next two years remaining for Project ABLE, the language consultant hopes to hold workshops for the teachers. At next year's sessions, he expects to raise questions about the curriculum and about teaching methods. Although all the answers are by no means available, the alienation of disadvantaged children has decreased considerably and "the prognosis for successful learning of reading appears to be raised by the evidence obtained to date."

Much of the curriculum is being changed as a result of Project ABLE; and the children who have profited

from the Project are, in turn, more able to benefit from the curriculum.

Correcting the Curriculum

> "The school designs its curriculum to provide for diversity. This enriches the curriculum, it does not modify or qualify it."

The supervisor of elementary education

Since desegregation, the curriculum has been evaluated and reconstructed again and again to try to meet the needs of the entire school population. The N.Y.U. research team made many suggestions to stimulate active learning within the classroom. One area which they felt would improve the quality of education was:

> ...greater provision for the cultural differences and opportunities of children in the instructional program. All children should have the opportunity to understand the role of the various racial and ethnic groups of this nation. All children need to have the opportunity to identify themselves and their origins with the cultural heritage.

A committee composed of the District 8 administration, the pupil personnel staff, and representatives from each school translated most of the N.Y.U. recommendations into point-by-point academic goals which are so general that no one could argue their worth. Most of the difference between the curriculum of Greenburgh and other schools lies in the sincere application of Social Studies Goal #1: "The child shall acquire a working, realistic knowledge of varying historical cultures and develop a respect for racial, cultural, and religious differences."

Materials Matter: Even the materials on bulletin boards in the halls and within the classrooms give the casual visitor a bird's eye view of Point #1 in operation.

In every kindergarten classroom there are photographs and illustrations clipped from both *Life* and *Ebony* magazines. In one kindergarten, a neatly mounted picture of a white father and his son is displayed; right next to it is another equally well displayed picture of a Negro father and *his* son. There is a chance here for all boys to identify with one of these pictures.

Negro dolls lie in cradles along with white dolls. Firemen and policemen dolls with dark skin stand in a house built on wooden blocks.

Books such as *Your Face Is a Picture* by Eth and David Clifford add enrichment to the life of the viewer.

Beginning readers in first grade use the Detroit series books which still have a distinctly middle-class flavor but do depict both Negro and Caucasian youngsters.

A fourth-grade bulletin board features newspaper clippings about the civil rights demonstrations at the World's Fair.

Another bulletin board is headed "Parts of the Body." There is a diagram of the nervous system and a well-written, knowledgeable report on it. Other reports include the circulatory system and the respiratory system. The visitor's eye is caught by a report on the skin.

There is a careful description of the substance called melanin which causes pigmentation in the skin.

A sixth-grade bulletin board has a photograph and an article about Peace Corps volunteers in underdeveloped African nations.

Corridor displays in the 5-6 grade building include pen pal letters from English friends and photographs depicting schools around the world.

In Woodlands High School, both the classrooms and the school libraries are stocked with basic resource books as well as current social commentary. Of the 12,000 volumes circulating at Woodlands, George Orwell's *1984*, James Baldwin's *Nobody Knows My Name*, and Vance Packard's *The Status Seekers* are among the most widely read books.

The entire staff of the Greenburgh schools is on a constant treasure hunt for materials—books, records, magazines, films, filmstrips, or toys—that will advance the appreciation of diversity. However, it is the daily classroom applications that breathe life into the curriculum and the materials.

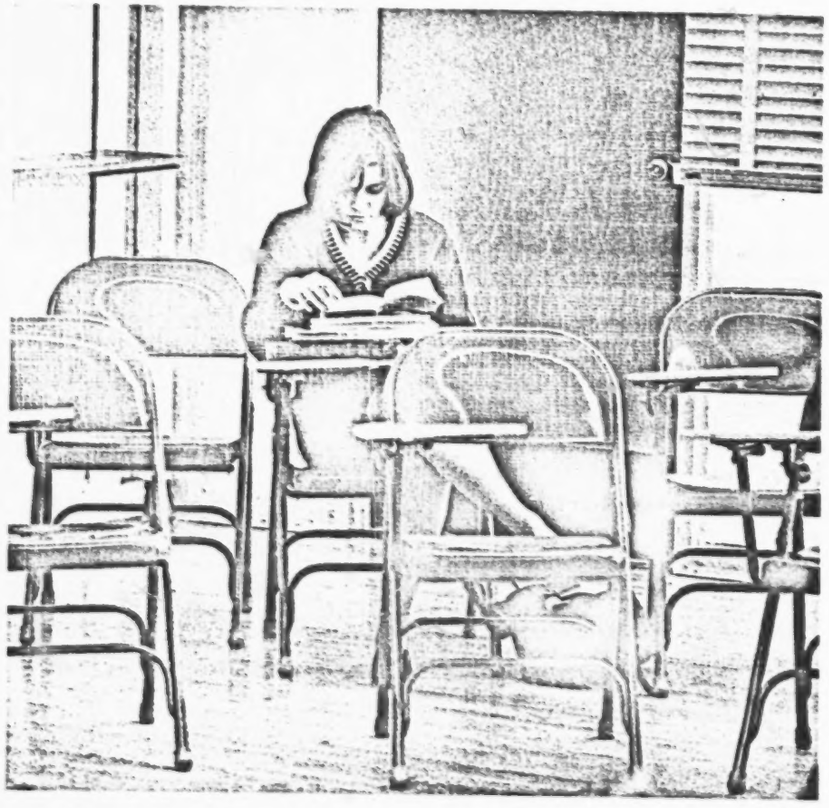
One Facet of an Honest Curriculum: A first-grade teacher has begun the standard unit on the family. But this teacher is not approaching it from a standard point-of-view. She is aware that not all of her pupils come from conventional Daddy-Mommy-children-type families. She accepts differences and encourages the children to talk about their aunts, their uncles, their grandfathers and their grandmothers who complete the family spectrum or substitute in it. Foster children, adopted children, absent parents, or dead parents are all part of the concept of diversification. It is somehow all right to these first-graders that David's aunt takes care of him, that Sara is a foster child. And this, in turn, makes it easier for David and Sara to accept themselves and to feel that they are not isolated.

In another first-grade classroom, the children are

busy writing riddles about their friends. One child prints the following riddle:

"She has brown eyes.
Her skin is dark.
She likes to play games.
She reads very well.
Who is she?"

Two second grades are having a singing lesson with



the music specialist. It's time for free choice of songs that the pupils like best. "Let's sing *My Dreydel* next," a Negro boy urges. The entire class gets practice in reading as they say the words to this Hanukkah song in unison. "What is that note with a dot over it?" asks the teacher. A young lady with long braids knows. "It's a hot note," she replies. "Yes, that's a good way to describe it," says the music teacher. "You come off of it quickly, don't you? It's also called a staccato." Christian and Jewish, Negro and white children all join in singing *My Dreydel,* on this bright morning in May.

By means of a large chart, a third-grade teacher helps pupils appreciate the Egyptian, Mayan, and Roman number system, along with the Arabic numerals with which they are most familiar.

A fourth-grade teacher is just completing a detailed study of the American Revolution and, along with it, she teaches about the current African revolutions. The specific grievances may be different nowadays, but the universal concept of popular revolt becomes meaningful. A class across the hall, also studying the American Revolution, has drawn political cartoons with captions stating "Go Home, Redcoats" and "Don't Buy Goods from England."

A sixth-grade group is rehearsing a play that they wrote about the fall of a Chinese dynasty. The Empress is a Negro girl of mature proportions. Her daughter is a dainty blond child.

Upstairs, in another sixth-grade classroom, the pupils are having a panel discussion on emotions. Self-

control is the topic under discussion. Led by the teacher, the children talk about what their responsibilities are when they are alone in the house, when for instance, both parents may be away working. The teacher asks the panel what they feel should be done in school with a child who misbehaves, who does not exhibit much self-control. "Do you think he should be put with other children who can't behave or with those who can set an example?" she asks. "Why do you think so?" she pursues, when a pupil starts giving short, lazy answers.

Neither the teachers nor the administrators are afraid to tackle the most controversial subject head on. One principal describes how, at a recent teacher's meeting, he asked his staff how they had handled the civil rights picketing at the World's Fair. Those who had avoided the issue sometimes insist that the children are "too young to understand." In Greenburgh, this is not considered a valid reason for ignoring the real, current topics that need to be brought up as part of the living curriculum of each classroom.

A high school social studies class is another example of this living, honest curriculum. The teacher opens the class by asking which amendments to the Constitution gave Negroes their rights. Then he questions his pupils about the reality of the situation, even with such legislation on the books. Everyone in the group is involved as the discussion ranges from the Civil War, to lynching, to Booker T. Washington's attitudes, to Presidents Hayes and Wilson, to Medger Evers, to recent Supreme Court decisions.

"How is the Negro prevented from voting, if that is one of his rights?" questions the teacher. Experience provides some of the pupils with answers; their reading suggests others. The teacher probes into the legal basis for white primaries and some of the students quickly realize that the constitutional amendment provided only for federal elections. Toward the end of this fas-

cinating period, the teacher puts on a recording of *In White America*. His assignment for the following day includes a careful reading of three dittoed articles written by journalists about voting registration in Alabama, Georgia, and Tennessee.

With teachers like this, it is no wonder that a senior girl, a Regents Scholarship winner, describes the cur-

riculum as "exciting." She was exceptionally delighted with her advanced math course, by her creative writing, and by "a wonderful course in world history that included Asia, not just Europe, the way most courses do."

Even though the teachers try to do a good job, the mother of another high school youngster (a Negro) complains that the books "cover up history." She objects to the omission of American treatment of Japanese-Americans during World War II. She finds it hard to understand that her daughter's American history book skips over all the positive aspects of the Reconstruction Period. She questions playing up United States losses at Pearl Harbor and minimizing Japanese losses at Hiroshima. "But," she adds, "it's less better here than in Brooklyn."

Aiding and Abetting the Curriculum: Three afternoons a week, immediately after school, elementary school children who need extra help in any subject-matter area are encouraged to go to Study Hall. Held in a local church, conveniently located near the heart of the business district, Study Hall is staffed by volunteer regular teachers as well as by interested members of the community, including several high school students. Any child from first to sixth grade is welcome to come, although in practice, mostly first and second graders attend these sessions.

"Tell your mother to send you to Study Hall," suggests one second-grade teacher to a child who is having pronounced difficulty in reading." From the little boy's face, it is clear that he will remember to tell his mother and that he will look forward to such a session.

Help classes are provided for high-school students who are experiencing difficulty in any subject. Every teacher sets aside an hour a week, after school hours, to be available to give help to those who ask for it. Even so there is a pressing need for more tutorial help.

Toward the end of a traditional, yet interesting eighth-grade grammar lesson on case and usage ("I like you and he" or "I like you and him") the teacher singles out four students to offer them, and anyone else who wants it, after-school help that very afternoon. Other pupils come too.

The guidance staff spends the bulk of its time seeing pupils. During the junior and senior-high school years, every child has a minimum of four yearly contacts with a guidance counselor. Some of these sessions are spent planning ahead; other are spent evaluating what has been accomplished, both personally and scholastically. The guidance staff finds time for far more frequent contacts with those pupils who require it. Clerical work is done by secretaries, not by professional guidance workers.

When College Night comes around, representatives from Howard and Fisk come along with those from Sarah Lawrence and the University of Akron. The school realizes that one of its functions is to open the doors to the many possibilities from which students can choose their life's work. The first Career Night is being planned for next year, when men and women

from all walks of life will be invited to discuss their work.

Extra-curricular activities are far too numerous to list. The dramatics group puts on *The Crucible* and *Stage Door,* both cast by talent, not by color. The band plays for athletic events. The cheerleaders chant and jump. The choir sings. The football and basketball teams participate in contests with nearby schools. Each and every one of these activities is chosen by some members of both races.

A very special extra-curricular activity, the Bi-Racial Discussion Group, may be partially responsible for the color lines being so loosely drawn at Woodlands High School. It consisted, one year, of three small groups, each with an equal number of Negroes and whites, boys and girls, and wherever possible, included youngsters who had reservations about members of other races. The group leaders were the director of student activities (a white man) and a school social worker (a Negro man). The purpose of the weekly meetings was a frank discussion of race relations in the high school.

At one such meeting, a Negro girl pointed out that the school buses for white students loaded and unloaded at the front entrance of the building, while buses for Negro students were brought to the rear entrance. Many Negro pupils felt that this was intentionally discriminatory. When the situation was explored, it was found that some buses had been deployed to the front and some to the rear of the building merely to alleviate congestion. It so happened that the buses which served largely Negro neighborhoods had inadvertently been the ones sent to the back. An alternate arrangement was easily made.

Other matters have no ready-made solutions, but the effort to bridge the gulf between the races remains the prime goal. In general, it has been far easier for most of the Negroes to express their grievances against the white students than for the white students to discuss negative feelings toward Negroes.

As a result of these student discussion groups, a number of parent interracial groups have been formed. Such programs are sorely needed in the still-segregated community outside the school.

Beside spilling over into the community, the bi-racial discussion groups have resulted in observable changes in attitude on the part of specific students and have eased some of the tensions that might otherwise have erupted into conflict within the school itself.

To sum it up, the school curriculum in Greenburgh is meant to reach all students. Though this study stresses only one phase—the intercultural experiences—it should be made manifestly clear that the curriculum goes beyond this dimension and deals with many more aspects of living and of learning.

Achieving a Better Education for All

Chapter IV

As in all social experiments, some results are tangible, some are a matter of tone and feeling. Greenburgh's effort toward school integration *has* borne fruit. There is evidence of demonstrable changes in achievement levels, in both the elementary and the high schools. It is possible to give statistics about college-bound youngsters, and it is also possible to discuss the drop-out rate.

However, the major concern of the administrators and the teachers in Greenburgh is the discernible change in attitude which has occurred. Those whose job it is to educate the children of Greenburgh have become convinced that integration has a positive effect on the psycho-social growth of all pupils. They believe that as the attitudes of pupils, teachers, and community are modified by positive action the general level of achievement automatically rises. This, indeed, has proved to be the case.

A Convinced Community

"When I moved here ten years ago, the woman down the street refused to give her little girl a birthday party because the child insisted on inviting two Negro children. This same mother recently had a pajama party for her daughter, who is now a teenager, and a Negro girl was one of the guests."

A white mother in Greenburgh

The mother who tells this story feels that integration in Greenburgh has been a two-way street. In some ways, the school was helped by the community; in other ways, the school has led the community. She feels that what was essentially a form of forced integration led white people gradually to accept the changes and to move them toward a better feeling for Negroes.

Another instance of community growth, cited by the same parent, deals with the housing situation. Only

seven years ago, when a house on her street was on the market, many of the neighbors in this all-white enclave got together to buy up the property rather than run the risk of having it sold to Negroes. Recently, in the same neighborhood, with an almost identical population, a vacant house was sold to a Negro. This was known and accepted without furor by the very same people who might have moved in panic just a few short years ago.

In general, both Negro and white parents are pleased by their children's fine academic achievements. They are equally pleased by the well-trained, intelligent, dedicated teachers who are the rule, rather than the exception, in Greenburgh. The parents are proud that so many visitors come to admire their schools. It gives them a feeling of worth when a major newspaper, *The New York World-Telegram,* does a series of three articles featuring their school system.

The biggest question still raised, especially by white parents, is in connection with the grouping policy. Some remain convinced that in dealing with varying abilities, the teacher must aim for the average and neglect the others. They maintain this conviction in spite of all evidence to the contrary.

Some, who seem unable or unwilling to move away to what they think is a "better area" with "less colored," grudgingly admit that the integrated schools have taught everyone to get along. Yet, as one woman put it, "My kids have Negro friends, BUT," and she hesitated, trying to find an acceptable way of expressing herself. "I just don't want them to get too intimate."

At the outset of integration, the schools found it difficult to reach the parents of some of the disadvantaged Negro youngsters. The school people made an effort to adjust to the schedules of these parents by meeting them either at their homes or in churches and other community settings; as a result, they gained strong support for their program. Even parents who have little time to devote to anything but earning a basic living have found time to play an active role in the school.

A middle-class Negro mother contends that "the schools are good for children if their parents watch and are interested." This woman found that in several instances her children were discriminated against. In one case, the teacher mistook natural shyness for hostility. The mother volunteered to serve as class mother and in this way helped the teacher get to know and understand her child.

The vast majority of the parents are sure that their children are getting such a good education that they could easily transfer them to any school with high academic standards. They feel that the administration and the staff in their community are well above average. "There is a real lack of racial problems in the schools," says one white woman, "only petty incidents which often have little or nothing to do with race." Walking through the corridors or observing in the classrooms of any Greenburgh school, a visitor senses an atmosphere of pervasive good will. It is one that encompasses both the formal and the informal activities.

Teachers and Pupils Agree

"In a segregated school, it is easy to accept stereotypes. But you can't accept these stereotypes if the Negro kid next to you makes marks at least as good as yours and behaves the same way you do."

A white high school student in Greenburgh

There is general consensus among the school staff and the students that as a result of the Greenburgh style of integration, children feel different about school and about each other. Spontaneous interaction between white and Negro pupils is common in classrooms, playgrounds, and cafeterias. There is no race struggle for supremacy, nor is there bloc voting during the election of class officers.

Pupils take obvious pride in their school. The assistant principal of the high school states that the behavior of the pupils in his school is better than in any other district in Westchester. "You won't find vandalism here," he says, "or gangs. It is because they don't encounter hostility here from adults or from adult institutions, that the youngsters don't feel the need to rebel that much."

Discipline problems are minimal; no pupil can be dismissed from school as punishment. As the assistant principal explains, "Many of the discipline problems in the high school include white youngsters who are insolent or who habitually come to class unprepared. The occasional fights between students have been carry-overs from outside situations."

A Negro girl and a white girl, both high school seniors, discussed some of their reactions to Woodlands High. They felt that both racial groups would be cheated in a segregated school. They agreed that the junior high school period was the time of greatest racial animosity. "You know," explained the white youngster, "there's sort of a sorority mentality operating then. Negro and white kids don't live in the same places. And when you're that age, you're very dependent on the kids around you. You need social recognition and you're afraid your friends will talk if you try to have a bi-racial social life."

The Negro girl accepted these comments and added, "Everything is suddenly more competitive in junior high school. The Negro girls are more mature physically and better in athletics during that time."

Her friends nodded and went on, "The white girls feel threatened in junior high. But later, about tenth grade, when maturity differences all level off, there is less of a barrier."

The two girls told how integration was an accepted part of elementary school; but in senior high school it was "a rediscovery." School functions are always interracial. Negro and white young people have begun to invite each other to private social functions; they find that getting to know each other in a new context is stimulating and rewarding. Both girls agreed that the high school bi-racial discussion groups have helped

immensely in eliminating the social stereotypes the two groups hold about each other.

The white girl felt it was a shame that the people in Hartsdale didn't take advantage of the merger. But "the good Hartsdale kids" stayed on anyway, on a tuition basis, she explained rather smugly.

One of these "good kids" from Hartsdale says that he himself lives in an integrated neighborhood and views integrated schooling as normal. As a Jew, he questions how any members of his faith can advocate segregation. "Some kids here," he complains," still perpetuate their home attitudes. They seem to think that any competition between Negro and white kids leads to preferential treatment for the Negro." He fears that the community has not been affected nearly enough by the school.

Dropping by the Wayside or Going Forward

"There's a very low drop-out rate here. That's because we care."

Head of a department at Woodlands High

When questioned about high school drop-outs, the assistant principal literally had to stop and think which specific students had left school. This past year, for example, he could cite two cases. One boy left in the middle of eleventh grade to join the army. The assistant

principal thought the boy would complete his education under army auspices. Another youngster left Woodlands High to attend a private boarding school.

As the school psychologist states, "Even the drop-outs are terminated to someplace. The school assumes responsibility in placing them in another school or in a job." The schools work through the State Employment Services, the Urban League, and any other agency which will help them find employment for drop-outs or graduates. (The Urban League has been equally helpful to Negro and white job seekers.)

The other side of the coin to that all-but-non-existent drop-out rate is equally bright. Almost all Woodlands High School graduates of the class of '64 (the first graduating class) have plans for some sort of post high school training. This class of 119 graduates has won $50,000 worth of scholarships. About 2/3 of the group expect to attend either a four-year or a two-year college in September. Of this college-bound group, 25 per cent are Negroes.

Plans for the 1964 graduates of Woodlands High School included:

59 going to a four-year college in September
20 going to a two-year college
14 going to technical or vocational school
5 joining the armed services
4 entering a vocational field in which they will receive further training (beauty culture, auto mechanics, etc.)
3 getting jobs as secretaries, clerks
5 beginning other types of employment
1 getting married
8 had no immediate plans

A partial list of their college acceptances includes Franklin and Marshall, the University of Pittsburgh, Howard University, Michigan State University, Syracuse, Cornell, Colgate, Hunter College, University of Connecticut, Boston University, New York University, Temple University, Pratt Institute, University of Chicago, Wesleyan University, Hampton Institute, Cooper Union, and the University of Nebraska.

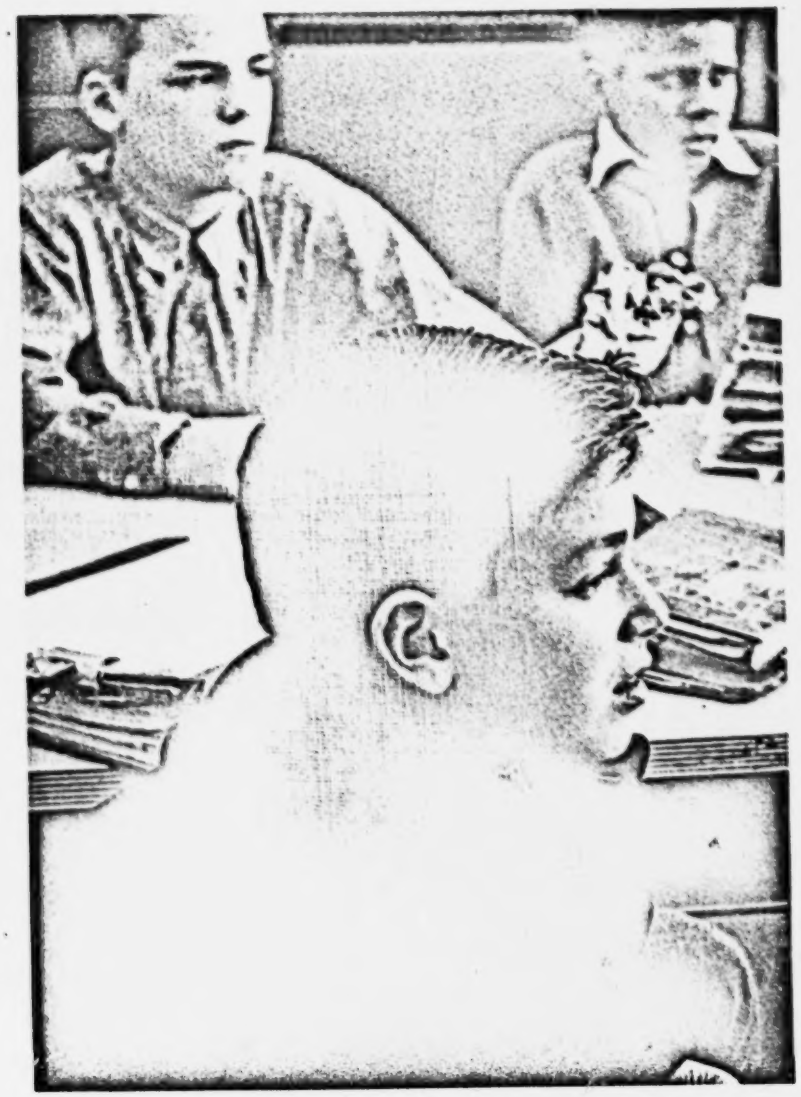
On the Way Up

"Lots of the white kids feel the competition from the Negro kids."

Senior at Woodlands High

For many years after desegregation, the achievement levels of Negro and white youngsters did not improve perceptibly. According to Dr. Fitch, it is only during the past two years—since Greenburgh began to put into operation the suggestions of the New York University Study Team—that the achievement gap has begun to close. Even at present, however, the scholastic averages for Negro children are below those of white children.

What Dr. Fitch is pleased about is that grade level norms are moving steadily upward for everyone. "All the children are getting a better deal," he states. For the



first time in the history of the Greenburgh schools, many pupils are "breaking" the tests, going over the top. Dr. Fitch cites statistics to show that the achievement pattern between Negro and whites is now parallel, rather than growing more divergent with each succeeding year. He feels that Negro youngsters still need further remedial reading and psychological help to overcome some of their basic learning problems. He notes that there is no difference between the two races in the range of I.Q.'s (although the average I.Q. for Negroes is about 13 points lower —99.2 for Negroes, 112.1 for whites). He believes that this thirteen-point difference is probably more a reflection of verbal ability and performance than of native intelligence. With Project ABLE working to eliminate the specific language problem, Dr. Fitch thinks it is reasonable to expect that as the gap narrows within the next four or five years, there will be no necessity for separate statistics according to race.

On an Elementary Level: Although sufficient time has not yet elapsed to make a longitudinal study of the children who began kindergarten under the Project ABLE program, it has already become obvious that measureable I.Q. scores can be pushed up as much as 40 points in a single year. (See Project ABLE section of Chapter III.) Even those who have not had direct contact with the intensive work of Project ABLE seem to be profiting from its effects.

The table below shows the difference between the "before" (1961) and the "after" (1964) Metropolitan Achievement Test scores for the second through the sixth grade, according to race.

Table 1:

		White grade placement	Negro grade placement
Grade 6	1961	*not avail.*	*not avail.*
	1964	8.00	6.81
Grade 5	1961	6.0	5.1
	1964	7.25	5.31
	Improvement	+1.25	+ .21
Grade 4	1961	5.2	4.1
	1964	5.83	4.58
	Improvement	+ .63	+ .48
Grade 3	1961	4.2	3.2
	1964	4.76	3.47
	Improvement	+ .56	+ .27
Grade 2	1961	3.0	2.1
	1964	3.32	2.50
	Improvement	+ .32	+ .39

The data in the foregoing table show that the achievement levels of both Negro and white children are rising. Furthermore, on the average, both racial groups have gained above the normal amount over a year's period; and they have gained at approximately the same rate. Although the average achievement scores of Negro children are lower than those of white children, they are at grade level or higher; the average score for white youngsters is well above grade level. The over-all averages for both groups are above grade level even though the tested I.Q. of Negro children averages 100.6, almost 11 points lower than the tested I.Q. score for Greenburgh's white children. It should be emphasized that these gains have taken place in classes having a wide range of abilities, that is, with heterogeneous groupings.

The average annual gain in median achievement scores from one grade level to the next over the past four years is 1.40 grade level for white children and 1.09 grade level for Negro children. The average difference in annual gains in median achievement scores between white and Negro children is .31 grade level. It should be noted that the average difference for 1964 is .18 grade level. This is the smallest average difference in the past four years. The simultaneous reduction in the difference of achievement between races and the rise of achievement levels indicates progress in meeting the academic needs of all children. Table 1 (to the left) compared different groups of pupils for the same years; Table 2 (on page 60) compares the same class over a four-year period. *It illustrates a fairly constant differential in favor of white children. The annual gain, it should be noted, is becoming more nearly equal.*

Table 2:

	White	Negro
Grade 6 (1963-64)	8.00	6.81
Grade 5 (1962-63)	7.07	5.62
Grade 4 (1961-62)	5.7	4.3
Grade 3 (1960-61)	4.2	3.2

Dr. Fitch strongly maintains that "if initial socio-economic factors are compensated for, achievement levels may be expected to become equal."

Regents Examinations in the High School: In the state of New York, academic achievement is equated with high scores on the state-wide Regents examinations. The following table shows the percentage of Greenburgh pupils who passed Regents examinations in each subject-matter area compared to the percentage who passed in the state of New York as a whole. There is no breakdown by race.

As can be seen, with the exceptions of Shorthand,

Table 3:

Subject	Per Cent in Greenburgh Passing	Per Cent in New York State Passing
Intermediate Algebra	82	78.1
Advanced Algebra	100	72.0
Business Arithmetic	86	76.5
Typing	100	73.6
American History	80	69.7
English Comprehension	89	84.8
French III	66.7	69.1
Biology	87	79.4
Chemistry	90	71.8
World History	90	79.7
Shorthand	67	90.9
Latin II	64	67.5
Earth Science	53	69.8

French III, Latin II, and Earth Science, the percentage of pupils passing Regents examinations exceed the percentage passing them in the state as a whole. (Earth Science was a new course and the Regents examinations for it were being given for the second time anywhere.)

In all the mathematics, English, history, and most science courses, the differences in percentages—in favor

of Greenburgh—are significant.

Accelerated pupils in all subjects did exceptionally well. A few of their scores are indicated below:

Table 4:

Subject	Per Cent Accelerated Students Passing	Per Cent Normal Students Passing
French III	75	58.5
Biology	100	83.5
Earth Science	83.3	38.4
Chemistry	100	84.2

Comparing the honor course students' scores with the youngsters on a normal schedule, it is clear that the accelerated pupils did appreciably better. This is true in spite of two facts: first a number of the accelerated students took Regents examinations a full year in advance of the time they would normally take them; and second, any pupil in District 8 desiring to take a Regents course may do so even if his previous scholastic record indicates that he is not a "good risk."

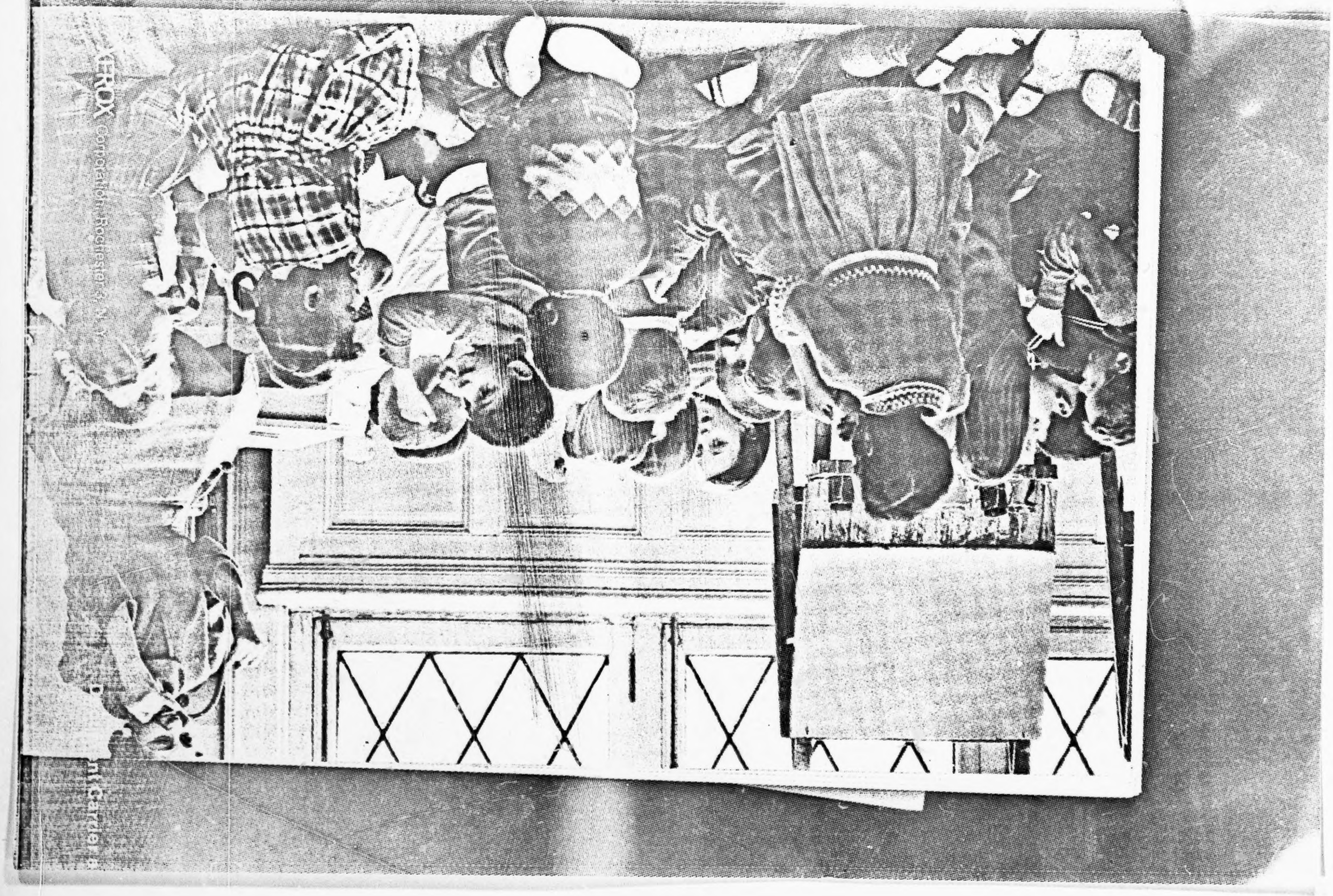
It is clear that if the only results of Greenburgh's integration program were those measurable by Regents examinations and standardized achievement tests, the effort would still be worthwhile. But one of the school psychologists places these results fourth on his list of what has been achieved. He listed the results of integration in Greenburgh as follows:

First, the development of a more positive self concept on the part of Negro children.

Second, a greater degree of social awareness on the part of white children.

Third, a greater degree of psycho-sociological growth for all children.

Fourth, a general increase in academic achievement for all children.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Chapter V

Conclusions

Change is Uncomfortable

"Every time we feel we have solved one problem, two others crop up."

A member of the administration

ANY established institution which makes changes experiences the pain of altering the status quo as well as the pangs of creating something new. In Greenburgh, many of the old ways of operating had to be modified or abandoned in order to deal with new situations which arose. This was done through a continuing dialogue between administrators and teachers; through support and recommendations from sources outside of the school; and through an open dialogue between the community and the school system.

The numerous faculty committees were highly effective in establishing and fostering communication between the administration and the teaching staff. There, grievances could be aired, ideas explored, curriculum revisions discussed, and responsibilities outlined and agreed to. These meetings were dynamic in content and interaction.

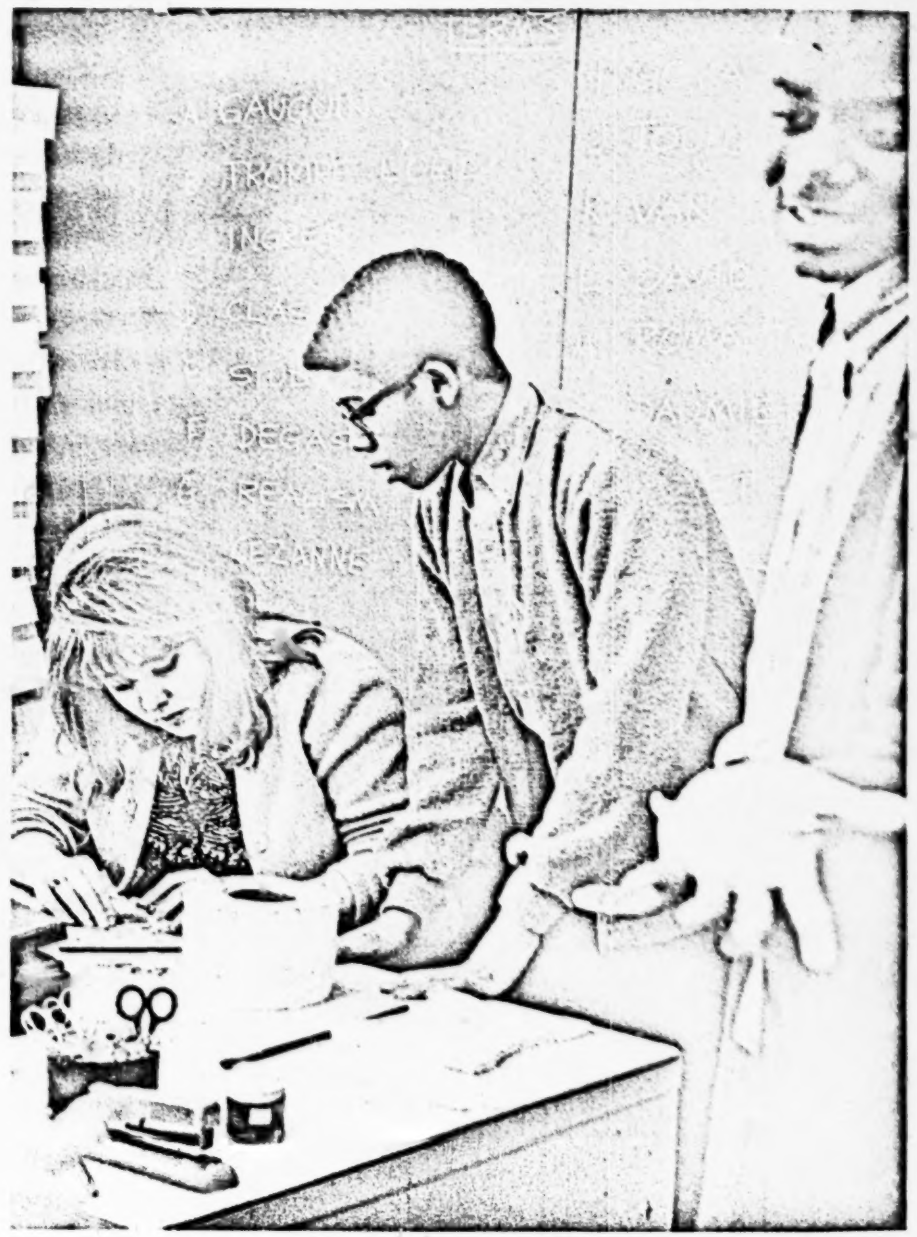
All levels of readiness existed in each committee. Some teachers were truly committed to new ideas and ready to chart unknown paths. Others dragged their feet, giving lip service but little else. Still others were openly resistant and opposed to any change. In the final analysis the changes *were* instituted because of persuasion, enlightenment, compliance, resignation, and retirement. Even today, however, District 8 has a complete range of commitments with little unanimity; nevertheless there seems to be an *esprit de corps* and an effective organization in which there is mutual respect among the teachers and between the administration and the teachers. The individual differences of the teachers is valued even though the resolution of these differences is often painful.

The intervention of the New York University Study Team created hostilities because it was an outside

group coming in to evaluate an on-going process; on the other hand, it also created a sense of pride by giving so much attention to Greenburgh and to the ideas generated there. Support from the Study Team recommendations gave the administration of District 8 leverage to put its program into action.

The process of change could not have occurred without continual interpretation to the community served by the schools, without an enlightened Board of Education willing to stick to its role as policy maker, and without a continual vigil to forestall unpleasant incidents. Ignorance, deliberate hostility, and inadvertent misunderstanding built up tensions that had to be dealt with promptly and realistically. Eventually a general sense of good will prevailed, although there are still many voices of opposition heard within the community. The school staff knows that its job is not nearly done.

Aside from the many problems created by changing an institution, there are other more specific problems inherent in desegregation and integration. All the classical fears and myths held by both whites and Negroes were met in District 8. Many people tried to protect themselves from racial tension by asserting that desegregation would create new problems. Others raised the cry that integration would lower educational standards. There were those who were personally defensive about their liberal stance. And there were those who used the racial issue to grind their personal axes or to foster their own pet ideas. Along with all the



people who found ways of blocking the changeover to integration, however, was a strong nucleus who had the intestinal fortitude and the tolerant awareness to help put needed changes into operation. All the variations in attitude existed both within the school system and within the neighborhoods which it served.

Not only did the classical fears exist, but also the classical attitudes that accompany change. At times there was actual intensification of hostility. Many white people denied their own prejudices; they even denied that any differences existed. Condescension and patronization were the prevalent attitudes. And in the Negro community there was fear, distrust, cynicism, hopelessness and despair.

From the schools came a frank recognition of new educational problems, problems based on integration itself. Achievement levels, curriculum materials, and grouping policies were probably the most crucial of these problems. Convinced as they were that their educational convictions were sound and that the changes to be made would benefit all children, the administration and the faculty proceeded to inaugurate the "new look" without evasion, before every shred of evidence had been sifted.

Those who insist that they are color blind, that they cannot see the differences, are, at this time and place, really being defensive about racial problems. District 8 substituted the idea of color sensitivity for color blindness. The recounting of a recent incident in one of the schools dramatizes this sensitivity:

A Negro boy was running through the halls. The teacher on duty noticed this infringement of the rules and called "Boy!" to stop him.

Just a minor incident, one which would pass unnoticed in most places. But here a member of the administration observed the event and asked himself what the term "boy" meant to the Negro child—and what it might have meant to the teacher. Whatever discussion takes place between this teacher and the administrator will be honest and direct but not threatening.

The over-all intention of the school system is not to incorporate Negro children into a white school but rather to help create a new social climate within the entire community.

A Look to the Future

"Our goal is to achieve a class and school setting allowing for acceptance and understanding; rich curricular experiences; elimination of situations which develop ego-deteriorating experiences."

A Greenburgh Principal

In spite of the tremendous gains of the past few years, much remains to be done in this never-ending process of improving education for everyone. Some of the major areas of concern still to be adequately dealt with are outlined in the school district's anticipated demonstration and research project entitled, "A Comprehensive Approach to Quality Education for All Children in a Totally Integrated School Environment."

The staff is acutely aware of the gaps and the differences in educational achievement that still exist. They plan "...a comprehensive attack on a district-wide front from pre-school through high school graduation on problems related to quality education in an integrated environment...." These problems and some of their anticipated remedies can be listed as follows:

1. Deficits and lags in language development, concept formation, school "know-how" and poor self-concepts in children of low socio-economic backgrounds are often pronounced. Early intervention on the pre-kindergarten (3 and 4 year old) school level with proper and adequate compensatory programs must be increased and intensified to counteract deficiencies caused by disadvantaged conditions so that true native abilities can be released and applied successfully to school-oriented tasks.

2. Without neglecting that content deemed necessary by the larger society, it is essential to so revise the curriculum and the methods and materials of instruction so that each child may be able to identify with them in terms of his experiences, backgrounds and future goals.

3. These problems and programs call for the expansion and development of the teacher's perceptions, skills and understanding. To that end, continuing in-service training for staff is essential.

4. In order to meet the student's individual needs there is need for greater flexibility in the organization

of the school (regroupings, programmed instruction, team teaching). Thus far the re-grouping of elementary school children to "needs" groups has moved extremely slowly and in limited areas only.

5. Limited basic living experiences and minimal exposure to cultural activities adversely affect motivation for and accomplishment of school-oriented tasks. Concerts, tours, speakers, films, etc. are all called for. Additional compensatory and remedial services are needed.

6. There are numerous parents who, because they must work, or because they feel reticent about making school contacts, are largely cut off from the educational experiences of their children. These circumstances in turn, limit the opportunities for quality education. Inadequate parental involvement, it must be noted, is not limited to the underpriviledged. The school must take the initiative in contacting these parents.

7. Many youngsters have inadequate opportunities to study and to receive assistance. Ways must be found to remedy this.

Process of Continuing Change

"The goal of the schools is to provide effective education for children of all backgrounds and to demonstrate solutions which will be within the capabilities of other districts."

Dr. George E. Fitch

The purpose of this study is not only to show what is being done in Greenburgh, but also to see which features of the Greenburgh system can be used elsewhere. It is the consensus of Greenburgh school officials that the Princeton Plan is merely a desegregation device, one which suited their community. They feel, however, that the mechanical side of desegregation is best decided in each locality. Moreover, they also believe that "saturating" or trying to upgrade schools without desegregating them first is, at best, a piecemeal effort. The elementary supervisor reverses this either-or alternative between saturation and integration by saying, "Yes, first integrate, and then saturate every school with new ideas, new materials." He is convinced that Negro and white children must sit in the same classrooms before it is possible to teach either group how to be good citizens in a multi-racial society. The net result of integration, he says, is "better teaching and better schools."

A school social worker expresses this sentiment in other words: "The earlier you start to work with all children, the more they respect each other and accept differences. Saturating without integrating is education in a vacuum."

When the staff in Greenburgh is asked what is transferrable from their district to other school systems, they insist that physical desegregation should come first. They then indicate a number of specific procedures to achieve true integration. There are at least fourteen of these steps:

1. Heterogeneous grouping to create a cross-section of the entire community in each classroom.

2. Early remediation to bridge the cultural gap. The elementary schools recommend early compensatory education for children from economically disadvantaged homes. This "saturation" is specifically geared to developing and enriching the verbal concepts of young children. Improvement of communication skills also widens the horizons of the so-called "culturally-advantaged."

3. Grouping in the high school according to potential rather than by tested achievement. At the secondary level, effective counseling plus remediation and enrichment narrow the achievement-potential gap.

4. Re-evaluation and reconstruction of the entire curriculum, to take into account the diversity of cultures and races. Implementing the new curriculum with materials with bi-racial content.

5. The re-education of teachers, administrators, parents and community leaders. This is accomplished by means of workshops and discussion groups with searching self-examination of attitudes towards all differences.

6. Hiring psychologists, social workers, and other special service personnel in order to develop competent and comprehensive programs and to lend support to the regular teaching staff.

7. Hiring those teachers who already have positive interracial attitudes and for whom teaching is truly a

profession, who approach it with a commitment.

8. Establishing a maximum class size of 25 students in order to permit teachers to individualize instruction to a greater extent.

9. Setting up a policy of inclusion rather than exclusion, to create the kind of school where every child is maintained in a constructive and meaningful program as long as possible.

10. Intelligent, sensitive management of situations with racial overtones, to combat them openly and without defensiveness and to turn them into positive learning experiences.

11. At every grade level, but especially in the secondary school, to involve the students in dealing frankly and constructively with learning and social situations which may arise.

12. Terminating the educational experience by assuming the responsibility for post-high school planning and placement, either on a job or into further schooling.

13. Creating an apolitical Board of Education that is primarily concerned with its role as educational policy-maker without being impeded by political considerations.

14. Enlightened and courageous community commitment. It was a small but active nucleus of Negro and white citizens in Greenburgh who first led the way to the Princeton Plan and later to voting the funds essential to carry out a sound program of integration.

The Greenburgh experiment has demonstrated that when these steps are followed the results are gratifying. The community at large has approved of the Greenburgh plan, because they have seen the self-concept of children of all groups improve. They know that teachers' attitudes have grown better. They realize that their children's achievement levels have risen significantly.

Integration, like education, is a process of continuing change and one not limited to the classroom. Just as each Greenburgh classroom is a microcosm of the community, so the educational system, as a whole, should be a reflection of an open, democratic society.

Equality through Integration

About the Authors

Dr. Arnold Buchheimer is Associate Professor of Education and Supervisor of the Guidance Laboratory of the City University of New York. He is a psychologist and psychotherapist and is the author of books and articles on counseling. His wife, Naomi, co-author of this booklet, is an author and editor of children's books and writer of curriculum materials. She has taught both elementary school and college.

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